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CHARLES WILLMAN BROUGH

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# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

BY

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COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION

BY GRACE H. DODGE

New York

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To

CHARLES RICHMOND HENDERSON

TEACHER, COUNSELOR, FRIEND

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## PREFACE

THE study of a wide field in industry cannot be accomplished by one person within a reasonable period, owing to obstacles of time and space. Therefore, the only practicable means of making such a study is to employ assistance. In the investigation which forms the subject of the following chapters I was authorized to engage such help as I needed, and it gives me great pleasure to acknowledge here my indebtedness to the forty assistants who made this story of wage-earning women possible. Their work, as well as mine, appears in the following pages. Theirs was the task of collecting material and furnishing reports on their respective fields, mine the task of planning and directing and editing.

The complete list of investigators, with the sections of country in which they worked, is given in Appendix I, but I want to acknowledge particularly my obligation to those who acted as sub-directors in the groups to which they were assigned, viz.: Miss Grace Lyman, in Chicago, Miss Caroline Manning, in New York and New Jersey, and Miss Amy Tanner, who, with an assistant, made the study of the coal fields in Pennsylvania, included in chapter nine. In addition to these, my thanks are due in special measure to my friend and co-worker, Miss Amy Hewes, of Mt. Holyoke College, who not only took charge of the New England investi-

gation and became responsible for the complete reports, but also aided by her inspiration and encouragement, the larger task. My thanks are also due to my efficient secretary, Miss Anna Seaburg, whose devotion to details made possible the completion of the work. The kindly coöperation of men and women all over the country helped at every turn. Busy social workers and people of leisure, employers and employees, assisted wherever they could and enabled us to carry the work to its conclusion. I have to thank the editors of the *American Journal of Sociology* for permitting me to use again material that has already appeared in its pages.

But in presenting the following glimpses of women at work, I must acknowledge my great personal indebtedness to the one to whom the whole study is due—Miss Grace H. Dodge, President of the National Board of Young Women's Christian Associations, one of the staunchest friends the working women of the country ever had. Her appreciation of difficulty, her constant encouragement and counsel, caused the hardships of the task to vanish, and only the joy in achievement to remain.

ANNIE MARION MacLEAN.

NEW YORK CITY,  
January, 1910.

## INTRODUCTION

THE National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations, organized December, 1906, has for its purpose to unite in one body the Associations of the United States; to develop and unify such Associations; to advance the physical, social, intellectual, moral, and spiritual welfare of young women; and to participate in the work of the World's Young Women's Christian Association. There are affiliated with it 190 city Associations, many with special industrial departments; 630 student Associations in colleges and schools; and five mill village Associations.

Early in January, 1907, the National Board realized that before true progress could be made it was necessary, first, to study its own work as represented in the above Associations; second, to investigate and study the possibilities lying before the Association movement throughout the country. As one means to this end, a Sociological Investigation Committee was formed, and had the pleasure of asking Dr. Annie Marion MacLean, professor of sociology, Adelphi College, to act as director of the investigation, with an advisory committee of the following: Dr. C. R. Henderson, University of Chicago; Dr. Carl Kelsey, University of Pennsylvania; Dr. Amy Hewes, Mt. Holyoke College; Miss Clare de Graffenried, Washington; and Dr. C.A. Ellwood, University of Missouri.

These busy friends most generously gave time, thought,

and effort to make the work complete and successful. It gives me pleasure, in behalf of the National Board, to thank most heartily, not only this special committee, but also the many other committees and individual workers in social questions, as well as organizations, who have so willingly coöperated in the work; further, to thank the president and trustees of Adelphi College, who for months gave free use of college rooms for the investigation headquarters; also to express to the donor of the fund which made the work possible the appreciation and thanks of the Board.

It would have been hard to find a stronger or wiser director of the investigation than Miss MacLean. She has for years been in sympathy with the Association movement, and recognized that much more could still be done by the Associations in the way of meeting the obligations resting upon them. Further, Miss MacLean has long been an earnest student of sociology and is the enthusiastic head of the growing department of sociology in Adelphi College. She showed in every detail of the investigation, wisdom, economy, and a coöperative spirit. The results of the year's study were given from time to time to state and territorial committees, and the vast array of papers, statistics, and special reports is now in the offices of the National Board. The demand came not only from Association friends, but also from others, to have at least some of the results of the investigation in more permanent form, and therefore this book, prepared by Miss MacLean, is presented to all those interested in wage-earning women. The book naturally covers only a limited range of the great subject and has not touched many phases.

Some years ago in a gathering of wage-earners, certain young women were present who were very "busy girls," but not weekly earners. The question was asked, "How can Miss —— be a member of a Working Girls' Club?" Quickly a voice came from the far end of the room, saying, "Of course she can be a member, and an important one, for she has had her wages earned for her in advance, and so she should do more for the Club than those of us who are receiving weekly sums." This answer contains a great truth and has often been amplified. All over the land there are thousands of young women who have had "their wages earned for them in advance" by grandfather or father. They have time, and owe it to their laboring sisters to share with them their leisure, means, and *selves, coöperating* together, not working *for*, but *with*. Knowledge gives confidence and power.

It is earnestly hoped that this book will be studied by thousands of those who have had "their wages in advance," as well as by hundreds of others, and that from the study will come a desire to work with the wage-earners, in bringing to all fresh inspiration and a deeper meaning of life. The motto of the National Board is, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." The One who thus promises the abundant Life has honored us by allowing us to be colaborers with Him.

To repeat, it is hoped that the facts contained in this book may so impress many that they will have confidence and power in trying to bring a fuller life to the brave and great army of wage-earners, found not only in this country, but in other parts of the world.

GRACE H. DODGE.





# CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	vii-viii
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	ix-xi

## CHAPTER I

SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF STUDY . . . . .	1-9
--------------------------------------	-----

No effort made to center on several great industries and follow their course in different sections of the country, for this has been done by other bodies, notably the government — Desire rather to learn a good deal about many women with a view to stimulating efforts in their behalf

## CHAPTER II

WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND . . . . .	10-30
--	-------

Original home of the factory girl — Numbers — Chief industries in which employed — Selection of certain trades here — Paper, shoes, textiles — Conditions of work — Type of workers — Wages

## CHAPTER III

THE NEW YORK WORKER . . . . .	31-54
-------------------------------	-------

At her best and at her worst — Total number employed — Variety of occupations — Many nationalities — Ensuing difficulties — Women in specified industries — Textiles, clothing, paper goods, department stores — Conditions of labor — Wages — Statistics — Betterment undertakings — Charts showing (1) Nativity, urban or rural ; (2) Rural nativity, reasons for coming to city, etc. ; (3) Working conditions ; (4) Social life ; (5) Statistics

## CHAPTER IV

	PAGE
THE CHICAGO WORKER . . . . .	55-73

The girl in the factory — As a garment maker — Paper worker — Electrical worker — Saleswoman — Statistical comparisons with New York — Interest of community — Homes — Clubs — Unions — Settlements

## CHAPTER V

WOMEN IN NEW JERSEY TOWNS . . . . .	74-84
-------------------------------------	-------

Many toilers — Conditions in silk mills — Thread mills — Potteries — 38 mills — 7500 workers

## CHAPTER VI

WOMEN TOILERS IN THE MIDDLE WEST . . . . .	85-98
--	-------

Special groups — Making clothes, buttons, and beer in Iowa — Making clothes and thread in Michigan — Conditions — Wages — Needs

## CHAPTER VII

HOP PICKING IN OREGON . . . . .	99-115
---------------------------------	--------

Seasonal employment — Field for women — Living conditions — Wages — Difficulties

## CHAPTER VIII

THE FRUIT INDUSTRIES OF CALIFORNIA . . . . .	116-129
--	---------

Growing field for women — Character of work — Living arrangements — Wages — Problems

## CHAPTER IX

WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS OF PENNSYLVANIA . . . . .	130-159
--	---------

Social conditions of women who live in the mining centers — Drudgery at home — A study in foreign population — Difficulties to be met — Dearth of opportunity — Needs outlined — Suggestions for improvement

# CONTENTS

xv

## CHAPTER X

	PAGE
UPLIFTING FORCES . . . . .	160-174
Investigation — Trades unions — Legislation — Wel- fare work — Social settlements — Working girls' societies — Housing — Young Women's Christian Associations — Many still not reached	

## CHAPTER XI

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT . . . . .	175-180
The chief needs — Larger social life — Greater effi- ciency — Legitimate recreation — Coöperation where possible — Suggested programme	

## APPENDICES

I. List of Investigators. . . . .	181
II. Schedules . . . . .	184-188
III. Statistics relative to Women Wage-earners in the United States . . . . .	189-190
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	191-198
INDEX . . . . .	199-202



# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

## CHAPTER I

### SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF STUDY

IN a recent discussion of the difficulties inherent in industrial adjustment, Mrs. Florence Kelley said that there are no more shifting data than those which concern employment, and this belief must be shared by all who have thought carefully about the subject. She further said, in elucidation of her statement, "One thing was true, for instance, Wednesday evening at five, but something happened to change it all by Thursday morning at ten." Here is a specific instance of this which came to the notice of the writer. A certain factory had for some time employed ninety stenographers, all girls; but the policy of the company suddenly changed, and the girls were replaced by men over night, thus lessening by one the number of establishments employing women in that town, and subtracting ninety from the total number of women employed. Such occurrences soon render the statisticians' statements false, but what is infinitely more serious they render the worker's life precarious.

This state of industrial flux, pointed out by a trained observer like Mrs. Kelley, is one of the conspicuous hardships which women workers have always to face, possibly to a greater extent than men, on account of their weaker bargaining powers. A semi-romantic interest is often attached by those away in the distance to the girl who

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

guides a machine and banters her comrades the while, but when the truth is known, she leads a very unromantic life, full of grim realities which she meets often enough with heroism.

The chapters which follow are designed to give only glimpses of these women wage-earners as they toiled in different parts of the country, during the year 1907, and mainly in the summer and autumn months before the effects of the financial stringency were observable. The investigation upon which these glimpses are based was undertaken primarily that officers and workers of the Young Women's Christian Associations might know more about the young women whom they would serve. But it was also hoped that others who had made no special study of industrial life might become acquainted with some of its varied phases, and thus develop interest in local situations, at least.

The needs of the associations, however, became the dominant factor in determining the sections of country to be studied. The entire time might have been spent in following one great industry to its various centers, but such a course would not have satisfied the needs of the organization responsible for the investigation.<sup>1</sup> The desire was rather to learn a good deal about many women in various trades with a view to stimulating efforts in their behalf. The industries<sup>2</sup> selected in each place were the half dozen or more employing the greatest number of women.

As a matter of fact, however, certain kinds of work, such as the clothing trade and making of textiles, stand out rather prominently in many of the cities investigated

<sup>1</sup> It was known that the federal government would undertake an exhaustive study of several great industries a few months later.

<sup>2</sup> No study of sweat-shops was undertaken.

## SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF STUDY

because they happen to be conspicuous everywhere in utilizing the services of women.

That woman is continually entering new occupations is true, but it is likewise true that she clings to the long-established ones, and is found in greatest numbers in these. Certain physical limitations tend to direct her choice. Where unusual strength is required, woman cannot be advantageously employed, but where endurance is a requisite, she is economically desirable. The average girl could not mine coal, fit joists, or clean sewers, but she can sell notions for ten hours a day, and stand all the time, paste labels on cans month in and month out, and tend looms day after day for years. The effect upon her health may eventually be as disastrous as if she had engaged in the heavier labor, but she can, at least for a time, be serviceable to her employer. The sexes are thus naturally absorbed by the industries in which they can be utilized most successfully. Even when working in the same industry, they will generally be found employed in different processes, and so it transpires that women are doing about the same things in the manufacturing industries in the east as in the west. Sometimes we saw them side by side with men, more often they were in large or small groups by themselves. But whatever the arrangement, there was always the nerve-destroying strain that so often turns girls into haggard creatures at thirty, and deprives them of their heritage of health.

The investigation dealt with women in widely scattered regions from New York City to the Pacific coast, including typical mill towns in New England and New Jersey, the mining regions of Pennsylvania, the great industries of Chicago, certain small cities of Michigan, and the great Middle West with developing manufacturing interests, and

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

the seasonal work of picking hops in Oregon, and picking, drying, packing, and canning fruit in California. The National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations had already made studies of Southern mill villages, so the South was not included in this survey.

The following table shows in detail the cities and industries studied :

PLACE	INDUSTRIES	WOMEN <sup>1</sup> EMPLOYED IN ESTABLISHMENTS INVESTIGATED
NEW YORK		
New York City	Clothing	5000
	Electrical supplies	750
	Cigars, candy, etc.	2400
	Printing and paper goods	1000
	Textiles	2000
	Stores	15,000
	Laundries	300
NEW JERSEY		
Jersey City	Watches	500
	Food and cigars	1275
	Paper boxes	200
	Soap, perfume, etc.	140
	Textiles	150
	Pencils	150
	Laundry	120
Newark	Clothing	1650
	Rivet works	150
	Printing and paper goods	500
	Shoes	160
	Cigars	300
Paterson	Clothing	800
	Textiles	650

<sup>1</sup> Round numbers are used throughout.



# SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF STUDY

PLACE	INDUSTRIES	WOMEN EMPLOYED IN ESTABLISHMENTS INVESTIGATED
Trenton	Potteries	
<i>New England</i>		
1. MASSACHUSETTS		
Springfield	Clothing	400
	Metal-working trades	200
	Cigars and candy	300
	Printing and paper goods	650
	Wood fiber manufactures	300
	Textiles	300
	Stores	300
Ludlow	Jute yarn	1400
Holyoke	Printing and paper goods	450
	Paper manufactures	1500
	Textiles	4000
Lowell	Textiles	12,000
Lynn	Shoes	2000
	Electrical supplies	2200
Fall River	Textiles	15,000
2. RHODE ISLAND		
Providence	Jewelry making	1000
3. CONNECTICUT		
New Haven	Clothing	1400
	Metal-working trades	2300
	Printing and paper goods	150
	Rubber goods	750

# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

PLACE	INDUSTRIES	WOMEN EMPLOYED IN ESTABLISHMENTS INVESTIGATED
4. NEW HAMPSHIRE		
Manchester	Shoes	1600
	Textiles	7800
PENNSYLVANIA	Mining regions <sup>1</sup>	
ILLINOIS		
Chicago	Clothing	1000
	Metal-working trades	2200
	Printing and paper goods	750
	Stores	17,500
	Mail order houses	4000
	Telephone operating	4200
Elgin	Watches	1800
	Publishing	125
MICHIGAN		
Belding	Silk thread	750
Jackson	Clothing	900
IOWA		
Des Moines	Clothing	300
	Food	75
	Textiles	275
	Stores	500
Dubuque	Clothing	700
	Cigars and breweries	250
Muscatine	Buttons	500
NEBRASKA		
Omaha	Clothing	800
	Meat packing	350
	Stores	900

<sup>1</sup> A special study was made of the living conditions of the women.

## SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF STUDY

PLACE	INDUSTRIES	WOMEN EMPLOYED IN ESTABLISHMENTS INVESTIGATED
Lincoln	Clothing	170
	Laundries	115
MISSOURI		
Kansas City	Clothing	550
	Food and meat packing	900
	Stores	400
Lead Regions <sup>1</sup>		
OREGON	Hop fields	
CALIFORNIA		
Fresno	Fruit picking, canning, drying, and packing	2000
San José	Fruit picking, canning, drying, and packing	1000
Oakland	Clothing	50
	Fruit canning, etc.	100
	Lithographing	50
	Gloves	75
San Francisco	Clothing	400
	Fruit canning, etc.	800
	Glass	40
	Paper boxes	40

The plan, as outlined, was carried out by a staff of twenty-nine women<sup>2</sup> holding degrees from seventeen<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A special study was made of the living conditions of the women.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix I for names of investigators.

<sup>3</sup> Acadia, Adelphi, Bellevue, University of California, Carleton, University of Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, University of Michigan, Mount Holyoke, Oberlin, University of Oregon, Radcliffe, Syracuse, Wellesley, Wilson, Woman's College of Baltimore.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

colleges. Of these, eight have advanced degrees from universities in this country or in Europe. Several of the investigators had had practical experience in investigating, while all had had more or less theoretical training. The entire staff, including office force, at work during the progress of the investigation numbered forty.

The field work of the investigators commenced June 10, 1907. On that date, two entered upon the Pennsylvania study and one began in New England. On the 17th of June, one started in New York. With these exceptions, the main body of the work opened July 1. The investigation in the Far West began in September owing to the seasonal character of the industries selected. The last of the field studies closed May 31, 1908. The actual time spent in the investigation outside of office work was a total of 208 weeks, or the equivalent of four full years' time of one worker.

The study was carried on in accordance with a set of five schedules<sup>1</sup> and specific instructions. Schedule I asked for certain confidential information from representative employers. Schedule II sought general information in regard to population, nationalities, chief industries, women employed, and efforts in behalf of these women for each town or city studied. Schedule III was for use in the mining regions of Pennsylvania and Missouri. Schedule IV, "Homes for Working Women," was introduced because the Young Women's Christian Association has maintained boarding homes for many years, and it seemed desirable to learn of all similar undertakings in the cities studied. The "subsidized boarding house," coöperative club, women's hotel, and the like, come under this head. Schedule V called for detailed informa-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix II.

## SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF STUDY

tion concerning individual women in regard to working and living conditions and social life generally.

In addition, an exhaustive study was made, in all the sections, of betterment undertakings for working women as found in social settlements, working girls' clubs, trade unions, the churches and other organizations contributing to the uplift of women wage-earners. The investigation was unique in character inasmuch as it was the first study of industrial life, national in scope, to be carried on by a body of college women at the instance of a definitely religious organization, and the story is told in the hope that it will awaken a more vital interest in a class upon which the burdens of life frequently rest heavily.

In all, four hundred establishments employing 135,000 women in more than a score of cities were investigated. The following chapters deal with a part of this long story, and the part chosen<sup>1</sup> should be of interest to those who care at all about the millions of girls who arise early and go forth to a weary day, spent in the main in making things that concern us greatly. By their toil life becomes easier to many of us, and while we enjoy the freedom let us not forget our young emancipators.

<sup>1</sup> General interest, coupled with the desire of the national organization responsible for the work, determined the choice. Material not included here has been used in other ways.

## CHAPTER II

### WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND

It seems but fitting that this study of women wage-earners should begin in the section that gave us the original factory girl, for it was in New England that women and girls first went out in large numbers to work with their husbands and fathers and brothers in the mill. They followed the industries from the fireside to the factory. It was a natural movement stimulated in many cases by necessity. At that time public opinion frowned on the idle girl, and work was considered a crowning virtue ; so the factory girl was not commiserated but commended. Things have changed in the last century, and now we find most people of humanitarian instincts looking with regret at the spectacle of young girls marching to the mills. The procession is a long one now in the old New England towns, and it is growing longer with the years.

Women are found in practically all the industries, but the extent of their employment in the textiles, shoes, and paper goods renders a discussion of conditions in these trades of especial interest. The making of paper was studied in western Massachusetts chiefly, the centering of the work in this section making it a most desirable starting-point. Women in the shoe industry were studied in Lynn, while Fall River and Lowell furnished the story of the textile workers, and it is the purpose to narrow the story down to those engaged in the manufacture of cotton cloth, since this is a product so commonly used by everyone, and in

## WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND

the manufacture of which every woman particularly should have a vital interest.

**Cotton.** — When Charles Dickens came to America, it was to Lowell he went to see the cotton-mills in operation, and it was of those mills he wrote his glowing picture of factory life for women. "They looked like human beings," he said, "not like beasts of burden." If he were to come to us to-day to see the cotton workers, he would, in all probability, be taken to Fall River first and asked to behold the product of the evolution of two generations. He would see no beautiful window boxes, no smiling girls making poetry as they worked, or moving about with songs on their lips. Life is grim in the Fall River mills and the women come perilously near having the mien of "beasts of burden." The semi-idyllic conditions of the early New England cotton-mill have given way to a system brutalized by greed and the exigencies of modern industry. The pressure of immigration upon the American worker is apparent here. Once, the fairly well-to-do farmers had daughters in the cotton-mills, girls who had gone to the factory towns to work and at the same time enjoy the advantages of town life. The long day, sometimes drawn out to fifteen hours or more, seemed not to be particularly burdensome, and the freshness and buoyancy of girlhood were not lost in the toil. But this was before the days of the half-starved foreigner, able to exist on very little, and eager for work at any pay; before the days of the great machines that virtually control men. The immigrant and the machine of great speed have pushed the native worker before them out of the mills, and into other occupations, and the change goes on. One alien race after another, lured to the mills, crowds the earlier arrival and underbids it oftentimes. The weaker ones grow poorer than before,

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

and the struggle for life grows fiercer. The ignorant foreign worker is no match for the modern factory, and it crushes him before he understands the freedom of the new land. The women suffer most because they are not fitted by nature to bear the strain. They are weakened, and their little children die before their time. It is a hard life, a cruel life, that is lived by the cotton-mill operatives to-day. Long hours at sinew- and nerve-breaking speed, coupled with uncertainty of employment and consequent lack of security of even a meager income, tend to dwarf the individual morally as well as physically, and the dull, hard faces of the workers should excite no surprise.

In Fall River, there are one hundred mills under forty-two corporations. All but three of these make cotton cloth. The entire population numbers 104,863, and 16,170 of these are wage-earning women sixteen years of age and over. Lowell, on the other hand, has several large corporations operating a great number of mills, each having from ten to twelve buildings and employing about 17,600 people, 4931 of whom are women, and 1000, girls under sixteen. But the "spindle city," even though it employs so many people and is able to produce a mile of cloth every minute of the working day, must drop behind Fall River<sup>1</sup> in the value of her cotton output.

In these cities, we may observe the general processes of making cotton cloth, which are presented here in order that woman's part in the industry may be better understood: (1) After the cotton bales have been opened by men and "mixed," that is, tossed or pulled apart somewhat, with occasional help from lower-class immigrant women, the raw material is put through the first machines in the card room to be picked or cleaned and comes out

<sup>1</sup> And also behind Philadelphia.



## WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND

"picker lap." This is men's work almost entirely. (2) The "lap" put through carding-machines, very largely by men, becomes "card sliver"; then (3) is drawn finer, into "drawing sliver," and (4) is drawn out still smaller and wound on "slubber bobbins," very often by men. It then (5) continues on the speeder frames to be drawn out more and more and wound in turn on "intermediate bobbins," then (6) on "roving bobbins," and (7) on "fine roving bobbins." It is finally (8) put on the ring spinning frames, tended usually by women and children, or on "mules," tended always by men, and spun into warp or filling.

In the card room, women tend the speeders of all grades, and girls generally are the doffers, that is, they remove the full bobbins and replace them with empty ones on one frame after another.

(9) The spun warp yarn is wound off on spools on frames outwardly similar to the speeder frames—women's work, usually done by younger women and under cool and pleasant conditions.

(10) The spools are then placed on racks and wound off on great rolls by machines, tended by young women, who ordinarily have chairs which they can use at times.

(11) The resulting warp goes through the great hot "slashers," always tended by men, usually and preferably more or less partitioned off, and is thus "starched."

(12) The rolls of warp then go to the drawers-in, girls perched on stools, who, with a special little hook, draw the ends through the eyes of the loom harnesses. These ends are then tied in to go safely to the weavers. "Filling" goes directly to the weavers.

(13) The weavers tend from four to twenty looms each, the former only in case of very fine or fancy weav-

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

ing, the latter but seldom. Ordinarily, women tend six, eight, or ten looms, according to their own strength and skill, the kind of work, and the character of the loom. The drop-wire or stop-motion looms stop automatically if a thread breaks, and so do not necessitate such careful watching or quick work as the others. Complaint is made that weavers are called upon to tend too many looms so fitted, and also that the looms waste time by stopping for merely loosened threads.

(14) Cloth-room processes come last, and in some mills are not found at all, one cloth room serving for a group of mills under one corporation. Here are trimmers, inspectors, and folders, who are all likely to be women except for an occasional man for the heavier lifting or other work the girls cannot well handle. Hours are shorter here, and wages the lowest in the mills. The trimmer sits or stands at will before a simple machine through which the cloth is rolled slowly enough for her to trim off loose ends or knots, or, stopping the machine, to mark serious defects which must have more elaborate remedy. The folders usually stand before machines which fold the finished product for the market. Inspectors also, as a rule, stand.

Such, then, is the way in which cotton cloth is made, and it is seen that women are found in practically every stage of its development. The work is not easy, neither is it carried on under desirable conditions. One might suppose that certain difficulties for the worker necessarily inhere in the processes, were it not for the light of modern science — a light which has not yet permeated the gloom of most cotton-mills.

Frequently the air is full of cotton fluff in the card room, and it is usually extremely hot in summer in the

## WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND

spinning rooms, where the rapidly revolving spindles generate great heat. The weaving rooms are generally hot and always slightly damp. The necessary moisture is ordinarily supplied by spraying steam into the room. A few of the newer and more progressive mills use cold spray "humidifiers," by which the temperature is kept automatically at 70 degrees throughout the year. In the average mill a temperature of 120 degrees in some rooms is not uncommon.

Very few mills seem to have any improved ventilating system; and draughts from the windows, especially the warm drying breezes of summer, make trouble with the work, causing threads to break both in spinning and weaving. The newer mills have, besides the usual two sashes per window, an upper small section swung on horizontal pivots, or horizontally hinged, so that it can open at an angle with the rest of the window. The air, as a rule, is rather hot than close, there being so few people in each great room. In winter, the mills are heated by steam, with seldom any introduction of fresh air save through windows. There is some complaint of overheat and dampness.

The windows are always supplemented by artificial light, usually electricity, for the darker days, and dark hours of winter days. In basement weaving rooms, such as the "rat pit" of certain mills, or large rooms in old mills, where windows are small, artificial light must be used the major part of the day. Some of the mills are experimenting with ground glass window-panes for the sake of obtaining whiter light. Employees complain that this tires the eyes, and also exasperates the soul because of its opaqueness.

Dressing rooms are unknown except for a little

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

screened alley between clothes hooks, seen in one mill. Women, as a rule, eat lunch sitting on the floor. Otherwise they sit on window-ledges, fire-escapes, door-sills, occasional boxes, and very rare chairs.

Accommodation for retirement is uniformly lacking. Typically, the men's and women's toilets, both labeled, are side by side; often their approaches are separated by a wooden screen perpendicular to their entrance wall.

Seats are always provided for drawers-in; practically always for warper tenders, who sit at times; seldom for spoolers or speeder tenders, who may sometimes sit on chance bobbin boxes; almost never for spinners, whose frames are often so close that there is not a place for even a box anywhere except at the end of a very long row; sometimes for weavers, — if the seats for these are fastened to the looms the vibration, nerve racking in any case, is tremendous; always for trimmers; occasionally for inspectors and folders.

The working day is theoretically  $10\frac{1}{2}$  hours, Saturday,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  hours in all cases. The cotton-mill carries with it a story of a long and a hard day. The mills usually open about half-past six in the morning, and the complaint is general that workers are compelled to begin from five to fifteen minutes ahead of schedule time both morning and noon.

Such, then, are the conditions under which many thousands of women work in the cotton industry. The workers are merely the hands that make the machines go, and frequently they are not cared for as well as the machines, because they are more easily replaced, — so easily replaced, indeed, that it is not necessary to consider them at all.

## WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND

It is instructive to consider the remuneration that goes with such work as has been described. The average weekly earnings in the various grades of women's work appeared to be about as follows :

Doffers	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	\$4.75 to \$ 7.00
Spoolers	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5.00 " 8.00
Fly-frame tenders of various kinds	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7.00 " 9.00
Ring spinners	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7.00 " 8.00
Warpers	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	8.00 " 10.00
Drawers-in	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	8.50 " 12.50
Weavers	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	9.00 " 18.00

Certain of these averages, of course, indicate very good wages ; that is, on the assumption that work is steady, which is not always the case. One superintendent stated that the average weekly wage for all women in his establishment was \$7.11 ; another claimed \$8.54 ; a third, \$7 ; a fourth, \$8 ; another, \$7.61 ; still another, \$7.75 ; and still others \$9.17, \$4 and \$5.12. These figures do not tell of the dire need that exists among too many cotton workers, high wages in certain cases hiding the low in a fair average.

Leaving these women for a time to the roar of their machines and the nervous strain always upon them, let us view the women making shoes for us.

**Shoemaking.** — For two hundred years the making of shoes has flourished in Lynn. When the first shoemaker arrived, ten acres of land were voted him in recognition of the value of his services to the primitive little community. It was the custom of the men he trained to travel from town to town and take up their residence with different families, staying long enough with each one to make a year's supply of shoes for every member. Gradually little shoe shops sprang up in Lynn and in

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

them the trade was learned and practised. Many of these wooden sheds are standing to-day and are still known as "tenfooters." Perhaps it was the proximity of the sea which made it natural to give nautical names to so many things. At any rate, the working force is even now called the shop's "crew" and each man has his "berth," not bench. The berths let for about a dollar a year in the early days and each shop had its "captain." They all contributed for fuel to heat the tiny place in winter, and they made from fifteen to twenty-five cents on each pair of shoes.

Farmers who tilled the fields in summer made shoes in winter, and long before the time of the middleman exchanged them for goods at the Boston stores. The men cut, lasted, and attached the soles in the shops, while the women bound them in their homes. "Nearly every woman had her shoe basket, containing uppers and linings, and beside her ordinary household duties strove each day to bind a number of shoes." These were the days of Lucy Larcom's "Hannah,"<sup>1</sup> so widely and so affectionately remembered in this part of the country.

But methods were soon to change. Before 1815, the shoes were all hand-made, the heavy ones being welted and the lighter ones turned. The shoe peg was introduced about that time. In 1845 machinery came into use in some places, though not in Lynn until 1852. Its

<sup>1</sup> "Poor lone Hannah,  
Sitting at the window binding shoes;  
Faded, wrinkled,  
Sitting stitching in a mournful muse.  
Bright-eyed beauty once was she,  
When the bloom was on the tree;  
Spring and winter  
Hannah's at the window binding shoes."

## WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND

advent inevitably meant large buildings and the factory system. Even where the small shops continued for a time they received the upper and lower stock from the factories, where the shoes were all finished.

Specialization has characterized shoemaking in its development, as it has almost every other industry. Between seventy and eighty hands are required to make a pair of shoes, and we find the cutters, closers, stayers, foxers, side-stayers, stitchers, liners, closers-on, turners, top-stitchers, eyeleters, and vampers — men and women — all at work in the same factory.

Unfortunately for the thousands of women employed, the industry is of a seasonal character, making the matter of employment uncertain, since many hands are laid off after the busy season. Indeed, it is said that all the shoes required for a year's consumption might easily be produced in nine months. Even some of the best stitchers, earning approximately \$20 a week when work is plentiful, leave the industry altogether for certain months of the year. In many instances during these months women engage in dressmaking, domestic service, music teaching, in short, anything that presents itself.

Women are employed chiefly in the stitching rooms. The heavier work, such as cutting the leather and attaching the upper to the sole, is done entirely by men. Besides stitching the linings, vamps, and uppers, a few girls and women are engaged in packing the shoes into boxes, putting in laces and sewing on buttons by hand or machine, repairing the patent-leather tip, cleaning and polishing and "skiving"; that is, preparing the edge for turning in at a seam. Stitching with single and double needle on the vamps requires skill and is well paid. This is also true of the closers-on and those who stitch the uppers.



## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

Stitching involves some eye strain but is comparatively clean work, and, except for the incessant noise of the machinery, is usually done under favorable conditions.

There are in the whole country 36,490 women in the shoemaking business, and it is estimated that about one-third of these are in Lynn—a number large enough to be of considerable significance. Twelve thousand women would normally mean 12,000 families now existing or to be established in the future, and too much interest cannot be evoked in the character of the work engaged in by so many actual or potential mothers, and in the money return made to them.

In connection with the question of wages the seasonal character of shoemaking should not be forgotten. The average wage for individuals is probably very seldom an average for fifty-two weeks. Besides the general flux of the trade, there is often a secondary shift between the different departments of a factory. If the cutters work faster than the rest, then some of them must be laid off until the stitchers can catch up with them. This may be an hour, or several hours, or even days, and the same is true of each successive process.

This loss of time, however, varies greatly from factory to factory. One manager says that such delays show bad management, and that it is quite possible to have a definite number of shoes turned out in a day, so that each worker knows in the morning how much is ahead of her. Then it is the manager's business to get the various kinds of workers so adjusted to each other that there will be no waiting necessary at any stage of the process. If a swift worker comes on, or several swift ones, so that certain departments get ahead of the others, one of the weaker women can be dropped and thus the balance regained.



## WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND

Under this system of a definite number of shoes a day, the earnings become practically a day wage.

These delays, however, occur in a great majority of factories in spite of expert testimony that they are unnecessary. The existence of this system greatly modifies the seeming good pay of some workers, as, for instance, the stitchers, who on full time earn from \$10 to \$16 and even \$18 and \$20 a week. Of course, the unskilled workers and those paid by time suffer also from the unevenness of the work. Outside the big factories, there is almost always a sign calling for different operatives, "Wanted—tip-fixer, foxer, vumper, etc.," and the labor shifts from place to place as it is needed.

As in all piece-work, there is wide variation in the individual workers, so that an average wage is not very significant. Here, however, the average for women and girls is a good deal under \$8; possibly for fifty-two weeks in the year it is nearer \$6, the minimum and maximum wage being about \$4 and \$20. The best stitching makes the best appearing shoe; and while a stitcher may get four cents a pair for her work on the high-priced shoes, a medium grade will bring only two cents,—yet in some cases she may earn more money on the latter because the character of the work permits of greater speed. Vamping is most difficult to learn, and work on the under vamp shoe now so much in vogue offers the best opportunity for profit. If allowed to work on this style all day a swift worker may earn \$4 or \$5 in ten hours.

The wages for the different grades of work vary greatly. One manager estimated them to run from \$7 to \$14, with the average for the whole number at \$9. They also vary slightly from shop to shop. In one factory employing 1000 women, the vumpers are paid one cent a pair for

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

cheap shoes, and a cent and a half for costly ones, and a good vanner can do twenty-four dozen pairs of cheap, or twenty dozen pairs of costly shoes in ten hours, thus earning from \$2.88 to \$3.60 a day. This is the most skilled and best paid work. The packers, who are among the lowest paid, get five cents a case of forty-eight pairs of shoes and pack from twenty-five to thirty cases in a day, earning from \$1.25 to \$1.50. The wages of the others run between these two extremes.

The piece-work system seems popular in spite of the nervous strain, which is discounted because of the greater freedom in time which it allows, and possibly it adds a certain interest. The only complaint is when a limit is placed on the amount which may be earned. This limitation, however, is unavoidable when a limited amount of work is to be given out.

The presence of many married women in the stitching rooms should not be overlooked in a discussion of wages. They often earn as much as their husbands. Frequently stern necessity keeps the wife at work, her wage being required to maintain even a low standard of living. This sometimes means that very young children are left at home without care, and the mother has little choice between deserting her home in the daytime or seeing her children without sufficient food and clothes. On the other hand, there is in Lynn a surprising number of women with families who remain at work in order that they may enjoy more luxuries; and the combined income of husband and wife makes possible a manner of living far ahead of that of the ordinary laborer. Many live in cottages very elaborately furnished, spend a considerable amount on amusements, own pianos, fine clothes, and in one case, an automobile.

## WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND

The conditions in most of the factories are fair. The modern building is taking the place of the old frame structure, though there still remain a number of two and three-story wooden shops. Even in the new brick ones, however, floor space, which is very valuable, has in all cases been carefully utilized. Apparently there has been none to spare for dressing and lunch rooms; and racks, with or without a partition around them, are made to serve the former purpose. The sanitary arrangements fulfil the requirements of the law and little more can be said of them except in one or two instances. Toilets are insufficient in number and poorly located, inasmuch as those for women ordinarily adjoin those for men.

Usually the employees are forbidden to use the freight elevators, the only kind in existence in any of the factories; sometimes they may do so at their own risk, and again permission is given to ride up only.

In shape many of the buildings are long, narrow triangles, with many windows. Even under such an arrangement, much work must be done by artificial light. When gas is used, the air is quickly vitiated, and this, added to the other unfortunate circumstances, tends to jeopardize the health of women in the shoe industry.

Thus it would appear that women engaged in making shoes have difficulties unknown to the cotton worker, while the latter is struggling along unmindful of this fact.

There remains still another of the trio of industries contributing its quota of hardship and support to the New England working woman, and that is the paper group.

**Paper-making.** — In 1900 there were, according to the federal census, 8709 women at work as paper- and pulp-mill operatives. Approximately 3000 of these are employed in the twenty-eight mills in the city of Holyoke.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

The women's tasks are found mainly at the first and last of the process of paper-making ; that is, in the rag room, and again with the final operations in the finishing room. From all over the country and from Europe, cotton rags are brought, and the bales emptied for sorting by women in the rag rooms. For the highest grade of paper, the rags are clean and white, such as come from shirtwaist factories. But there are also large quantities of rags of every description from all possible sources, filthy to the last degree and dangerous to health. After the sorting and removing of foreign matter by the women, the rags are cut and chopped by machines in the same room. These fill the air with lint and dust, and the women wear caps to protect their heads, but there is no way of keeping the dust from the lungs. In one or two of the newer mills, hoods and fans collect a good deal of it, the motive being economic rather than sanitary, for the dust has considerable commercial value.

Practically no young girls are found in this work, and many of the older women are married. Since the custom of giving this work to married women prevails, in some places, they stay only seven and a half hours, and then go home to their domestic duties. In spite of every reason for the contrary, the women appear to be in fairly good physical condition for their ages.

After the paper is finally made, cut, and dried, it goes to the finishing room for the platers and calendrers and to be ruled and counted. The plater girls have the easy, though monotonous, task of feeding in sheets of paper to the hot cylinders and taking them out on the other side. The calendrers place the paper between boards covered with cloth, and then put it under high pressure to receive the imprint of the woven goods. This work is more labo-

## WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND

rious, as it requires a good deal of lifting. The counter is the most highly paid woman in the paper-mill, and though her task is not difficult, it calls for constant vigilance. The finishing processes are all clean and well liked by the girls.

In paper-mills, as elsewhere, wages vary with the process and the skill of the operative, and are almost entirely paid by the piece, and so it is futile to estimate an average wage for all. The rag pickers earn from 80 cents to \$1 a day ; the platers and inspectors about the same ; calendrers from \$1.25 to \$1.40 ; and the counters \$2.00. In the work connected with making blank books, the average weekly earnings are as follows : beginners, \$3.50 to \$6 ; assemblers, \$7 to \$8 ; hand sewers, \$8 to \$9 ; and machine sewers, \$10 to \$12.

In the large paper-mills of Holyoke, about half of the employees are women, and mainly native Americans, French Canadians, Irish, and Germans. Most of them have homes of their own, of one kind or another, and one does not observe the abject need that too often appears in larger cities, but many of them have no opportunity for self-improvement, or for proper pleasure.

An examination into the housing situation in Holyoke reveals most of the known varieties of tenements. Among the oldest is the type of the square brick house, two and three and four stories high, with slanting roof, originally erected by the mill companies for their employees, a kind well known throughout New England manufacturing towns. Holyoke has not very many and they are scattered. They are without sanitary conveniences and the rooms are poorly arranged. There are also the cheap frame cottages and the larger wooden tenement houses. These are sometimes found between two intersecting pairs of parallel streets, built in behind the houses facing the streets.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

Boarding-houses of various kinds abound and all have changed greatly from the old days when they were run by the companies and under their regulations. Of a list of twenty-two, seven appear to be respectable and were so believed to be by the police matron, who, in this case, knows the situation intimately. Four of the same number have distinctly unsavory reputations. Not one was in any degree attractive. Well-conducted boarding-houses or hotels for working women without other than the usual regulations, and run on a thoroughly business basis, are greatly needed in the city. The independence which is the right of the self-respecting woman who earns her own living will not be given up by the spirited mill girl, and any lack of opportunity for its exercise would keep away just the ones who most need the right kind of home.

But it may be safely said that a very small number of the women operatives live in boarding-houses. Most of the boarding is with private families; and here it is very difficult to generalize, for conditions are so different. Often by making such an arrangement, a young girl secures a model home; again it is far from what could be desired. The cost is rather uniformly \$3 or \$3.50 a week.

The practice of lodging in one place and taking meals in another is becoming very common. It is the young girls living in this way who are most liable to meet temptations of various kinds. In some places where girls lodge, they are not allowed to have company in their rooms, therefore they meet their men friends on the street, and at less desirable places.

But this is the dark side of the picture. In pleasing contrast is the newer type of tenement, where a higher standard of living is maintained. In families having three

## WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND

or four workers, frequently the mother being one, the combined income permits a very comfortable mode of living. And a comfortable home should be possible for every woman who works, but by some strange turning of Fortune's wheel, ordinarily the woman who works the hardest has the poorest place to live, while she who does nothing frequently dwells in luxury. The women who make paper and shoes and cotton cloth for us are not crying for luxuries, but the thinking ones do wish for a chance to provide themselves with decent comforts, and it behooves society to help them to the attainment of so rational a desire.

In several instances, employers who sought to improve conditions met with little success. In one case, a model lunch room was equipped and good fifteen-cent lunches served, but it was not well patronized, and in spite of every effort it won no popularity and had to be abandoned. Likewise, rest rooms were fitted up for the girls and smoking rooms for the men, but the furniture was abused, the magazines torn, and the employer feels that the employees were ungrateful and unappreciative, and is honestly at a loss to understand the situation. This is the usual story of such efforts.

Another employer, after meeting with a similar rebuff, states that he believes the Almighty decreed some of us to work by brains and others by muscle, and that the latter class was made without the "virtue of appreciation." Therefore, he thinks it is foolish to take the trouble to improve conditions. This is undoubtedly a pessimistic view of the situation, but a view which the employer who expects gratitude in return for his efforts is likely to take. The man who makes his factory as decent and pleasant a place as his industrial processes will permit, should find



## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

satisfaction in the effort, and in the knowledge that his employees are not injured by their toil.

In the paper-mills, the shoe shops, and the cotton factories of New England, women are unduly fatigued by their labor, because a little more attention to the installation of improvements is needed. Noise, foul air, and a lint-laden atmosphere are doing their worst for the girls who must endure them, and it is socially desirable that these remediable ills should cease, regardless of the fact that the women concerned might give evidence of lack of appreciation of the change. Their main interest centers on wages, and anything contributing to a real or fancied reduction of their earnings will inevitably be viewed with distrust.

Many agencies are actively engaged in trying to make life brighter and better for the New England workers, but their task is not simple. Lack of interest and weariness on the part of the toiling women prevent a rapid extension of educational work, and the barrier of a foreign tongue is sometimes insurmountable. Club and class activities frequently demand more intellectual effort than the working women can give. Agencies offering exciting pleasures meet with more ready response. Cotton-mill women particularly are deadened by their work, and they need wholesome recreation at night. Much that is unwholesome is already at hand.

In a canvass of 1289 women working in 111 establishments in 8 New England towns, it was found that 12 per cent were making use of opportunities for study which included various types of instruction, from music and French to embroidery and cooking. Sixty-one per cent of the 1289 women were under twenty-five years of age, and 79 per cent unmarried, and 60 per cent native Americans.

The Americans generally avail themselves of opportu-



## WOMEN WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND

nities for self-improvement to a greater extent than the foreigners, with the exception of the Jews,<sup>1</sup> but their wages are not perceptibly higher than those of the illiterate Europeans who have pushed their way into the mills. It is true that the natives are rarely found in the most menial types of work, such as rag sorting, but they must compete with the foreigners in practically all the other processes.

Twenty-eight per cent of all the women interviewed earned less than \$7 a week, with a minimum of \$2.50 when work was fairly regular. That an overwhelming majority of the 1289, in all 1021, lived at home, is true, but of this number 92 per cent contributed to family support, either by a direct payment for board or in other ways. We found the girls working for "pin money" a negligible factor. The women were working from economic compulsion. Instances where this is not the case are made much of by those who see only lower profits in any agitation to increase wages. No intelligent person would undertake to support the position that girls can live decently and comfortably in Fall River, Lynn, Holyoke, or Lowell on an average income of \$4 or even \$5 a week. Subsidized boarding-houses may help them to do this, yet the ultimate effect of such continued assistance must be deleterious to morals. Coöperative undertakings on a self-supporting basis are not open to this criticism. Working conditions can never be called good while wages do not permit the woman a self-respecting existence. Every effort to brighten the lives of women wage-earners should be commended, but futile indeed will such efforts be if they disregard the urgent need for a living wage, without which women cannot rise.

Long hours and unsanitary workshops can be, and

<sup>1</sup> Of the 1289 cases, only 2 per cent were Jews.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

sometimes are, prohibited by law, but the all-important question of wages must be left to other forces. The mill women, themselves, in some instances, are banding together in organizations for this purpose, and they should be aided in their struggle. Their somewhat militant methods may be subject to censure, but the principle involved is sound. The days of Lucy Larcom and the spindle poets are gone, but a new day of shorter hours and higher wages will dawn, when all the betterment forces in New England will realize that women's lives are more valuable than paper, and shoes, and cotton cloth, and will combine not only to make the laborer worthy of her hire, but to see to it that the hire is adequate to the needs of modern life.

## CHAPTER III

### THE NEW YORK WORKER

A FIELD of unusual interest, so far as the employment of women is concerned, is presented by New York. Here we find the highest prizes in the industrial world ; here the most abject misery that can be evolved from a system of virtual wage slavery. It is here that we see the former cash girl earning \$6000 a year as foreign buyer for her firm. It is here that behind still other counters, girls are receiving \$2.50 or \$3 a week and growing weary of the futile effort to be respectable. In this big city, a forewoman in a clothing factory may earn enough to support a family in comfort, and in the same great metropolis her sister worker makes but two cents and a half an hour, hemming by hand a little garment for a baby. Nationality presses on nationality ; physical strength presses on weakness ; while efficiency constantly pushes against inefficiency, and through it all the average girl who works for a living fights hard and often in a losing contest.

Many studies have already been made of phases of the life of wage-earning women in New York. Many more might still be made without exhausting the subject or exhausting the interest of thinking people. The girl who works is everywhere announcing herself by her presence and demanding by her very helplessness that people stop to consider her. New York City furnishes nearly 400,000 of the upwards of 5,000,000 self-supporting women in the entire country, and these are in practically all the great

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

industries represented in the city. As manufacturing processes become more and more specialized, woman extends her industrial boundaries, and the first city in the country offers constant opportunity for this extension.

This chapter deals with the working conditions of 27,000 women in 91 establishments in 7 distinct industries, and gives a detailed study of 1476 of these women representing the different occupations. It is the purpose here to present a view of the average girl as she toils in factory or shop all over this great city. Others are presenting studies of special industries, so we shall simply give a quick survey of a large field in the hope that even a glimpse of the industrial life will stimulate a wider interest in the worker.

**Clothing.** — The view may well begin with the clothing trade, which interests and concerns us all. Moreover, the centering of the trade in New York City makes a consideration of the conditions in this work of especial significance. The city now controls the clothing trade of the entire country, and utilizes in its manufacture the services of 120,000 people, of whom 70,000 are women. Very unfortunate conditions accompany most phases of the trade, inasmuch as it readily lends itself to home work, with its long hours, low wages, and danger from disease. We made no effort to study the thousands of such "finishers," but confined ourselves to the factory operatives. Many of the workers are foreigners and live in the densely crowded quarters. A large proportion are Jewish, which is not surprising, inasmuch as the Jews control the manufacture of clothing in New York City.

Women were found operating power machines, pressing with heavy irons, examining the finished product for flaws, and designing; in some shops, doing everything, in fact,

## THE NEW YORK WORKER

but cutting, which is men's work, while in others, they were employed only for basting in linings, putting on buttons, and the like. In the making of women's garments, there is more variety and more opportunity for specialization than in men's clothes. For example, tucking alone keeps scores and scores of girls busy all day. The sewing on of fine laces requires considerable skill, as it must be done without basting. In spite of much subdivision, it would be an easy matter for any bright, ambitious girl to learn all phases of the work so that she could be shifted from one kind to another with the need, and thus be able to avoid idleness with its consequent limitation of income. Most of the workers, however, do not care to acquire this general skill, being satisfied, apparently, to learn their special tasks. An example of the extent to which subdivision of work is carried may be seen in the making of a plain cotton wrapper, on which nine hands besides the cutter are employed. More elaborate garments call for a proportionately greater subdivision.

Many of the factories visited occupy lofts in high buildings, and thus have light and air; others occupy floors in one or several connecting buildings, frequently poorly adapted to the comfort or convenience of the worker. In the majority of cases, the dressing and toilet accommodations were extremely poor, and in some instances a menace to health. Many of the girls worked amidst the direst confusion, material in all stages of completion being heaped up everywhere. Several managers maintained that the girls were so untidy that it was impossible to have an orderly shop, while others said the type of work necessitated disorder.

Employees in the trade are paid almost entirely by the piece, although some shops have a few week work-

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

ers in certain processes. When a weekly wage is paid to beginners it seems to be uniformly about \$3. The wages naturally depend somewhat upon the season but much more upon the worker's skill and swiftness. In one establishment employing forty girls there were found some who practically never made less than \$11 a week, while the others average between \$4 and \$7. There is thus great variation in the weekly earnings with consequent heartburnings and discouragements. The girl who works hard sewing on buttons, and on Saturday gets only \$4, cannot regard with equanimity her friend who stitches seams and earns two or three times that sum. The argument that the latter is worth more to her employer makes no strong appeal, and she frequently grows sulky and chews her gum the harder while brooding over her wrongs. On the whole, however, the girls are a merry lot. They are young, and youth is ever hopeful.

In the majority of cases, the wages quoted by the manager were somewhat higher than those vouched for by the employees. This does not necessarily mean that the employer wilfully misrepresented the case, but he undoubtedly gave the sum that it was possible for a girl to earn in her own particular line, provided the supply of work was constant. The actual earnings would fall far below this. Irritating delays are liable to occur, and the girl and her machine will be idle while the opportunity to earn precious pennies disappears with the minutes.

An ever present source of complaint in many places is the time-honored custom of requiring each machine operator to pay for the thread she uses. She is obliged to purchase it from her employer, and often at a higher rate than she could secure it elsewhere. The necessity for having uniform quality does not seem to the

## THE NEW YORK WORKER

girl sufficient ground for such a regulation, and, moreover, she cannot understand why she should pay for the thread used to sew the employer's goods which are sold by him, thread and all. Sometimes she strikes, because it seems so inexplicable, but she usually goes on paying for the thread. Older heads than hers have puzzled over this and have refused to be satisfied with the proffered explanation that it is necessary in order to prevent reckless waste. It seems a good deal like compelling the cook to furnish the salt.

In one factory, where 300 women worked away and complained constantly about the thread injustice, there was a lunch room where good food was supplied by the firm at cost, and a pianola stood ready to give forth music while the meal was in progress. The employees regarded these evidences of good intentions on the part of their employers with ill-concealed suspicion. The pianola particularly offended them. They insisted it was bought with their thread money, and they reckoned to a nicety the proportion from each one that went into it. The thread deduction frequently amounts to more than a dollar a week. The employers, in turn, were exasperated by the girls' unappreciative attitude, and finally abandoned the undertaking.

In some factories, the girls talked as freely as they could above the noise of the machines, but, on the whole, work was too serious to be coupled with much conversation. Speed was the watchword, and to it each one hearkened, for speed means money; speed means preferment; and it may mean permanent work. That it may also become synonymous with nervous wreckage, premature age, and even death, is not considered in the mad race to turn out the finished product. This high



## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

rate of speed, continued throughout a day of nine and a half or ten hours in length, leaves its impression on even the most robust worker. There was little or no overtime required at the season in which this investigation was made, although it is an important item in the day's weariness at certain times of the year. The rush seasons in the clothing trade call for work at very high tension for unduly long periods. Then, the garment shops are the scene of incessant activity, and girls may be seen rushing to work early in the morning, pale and jaded from the former day's toil, yet glad that there is work to do. At night, almost numb from exertion, they look dully around for some relief for tired nerves, and too often find it in the glare of the street. But not all the tragic story of industry is found among the clothing makers. Others contribute their share.

It is but a step from making clothing to the making of cloth and allied textile processes, so we may proceed to a consideration of the latter, and learn from the factories visited and the women interviewed, something of what work means to them.

**Curtains, Ribbons, and Twine.** — We followed 2000 women through twelve factories engaged in making things as widely remote as lace curtains and twine, and the working lives of these women may be best understood by giving glimpses of typical factories. For curtains, let us take two.

The first occupies the third floor of a rather small building and the workers seem crowded together. The hand sewers sit in close rows about four deep, facing the light. There are only a few machines. Most of the women can sit at their work, but the pinners and pressers have to stand. There are no dressing rooms, and



## THE NEW YORK WORKER

the employees' garments hang on the walls of the work-room. Toilets are provided, but no lunch room. The girls eat in the same spot where they work, and it is a wonder that everything is not ruined. The work done here is beautiful, — all kinds of fine lace curtains are made, — but the place is very untidy.

There are about seventy-five girls employed, and most of them are young, although there are a few older Italian women. There are some Americans, but they are being replaced rapidly by Italians. The girls do not seem to be as intelligent as one might expect in such light, clean work. Doubtless, the lack of conveniences, and general air of disorder, account for this.

All the work is done by women. The curtains are designed by the superintendent, then cut, pinned, sewed, and pressed. Most of the sewing, which is appliquéing lace to net, is done by hand and is somewhat of a strain on the eyes. It is clean work and should be attractive, but the hours are long, from eight to six, with only a half-hour at noon. A fine is imposed for tardiness, and this is a constant source of annoyance. There is seldom overtime required in the shop, but the girls frequently take work home to finish. In this way they are deprived of sleep and find it a hardship to reach the factory at eight.

The best workers here are able to earn from \$7 to \$9 a week by stretching out the day with home finishing of such parts as can be easily carried.

The employees were unanimous in their condemnation of the management, and a very hostile spirit prevailed. "Ungrateful," the superintendent, a woman herself, called them.

The second factory occupies one floor of a large building, well supplied with natural light and fresh air.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

The place is clean and orderly and not unusually noisy. The conveniences are not modern, but seem adequate. The cloak and retiring room is simply a corner screened off by packing cases, but it is private. There is no lunch room, but the girls make tea on a gas stove, cover the large work-tables with papers, and sit around them and eat in great sociability. They have three-quarters of an hour at noon, and work eight hours. There is no overtime at the factory, but special tasks are finished at home. The wages are no higher than those in the first establishment, but a totally different spirit prevails. The fifty women employed say the work is pleasant and the management most considerate. A week's vacation with pay is the reward of a year's service.

The kind of work carried on in the two factories does not necessitate nerve-destroying speed at high-power machines, and is undoubtedly more desirable than labor in a waist factory.

Quite different in character is a twine factory employing 400 women, which may be taken as a type. Here most of the women employed are forlorn and middle-aged, or young foreign girls, poor and without ambition. The latter are full of animal spirits, boisterous and rather unruly.

The women are engaged in a variety of processes, yielding varied earnings. The work of the young girls is doffing; that is, collecting the empty spools and replacing them with full ones, gathered from the machines in large boxes on rollers. This requires activity rather than skill. The pay averages about \$4 a week. Balling the twine for the market is easier and pleasanter than doffing, and the rate is somewhat higher. Twisting and winding are also rather clean processes, and pay about

## THE NEW YORK WORKER

the same as balling, that is, from \$6 to \$7 a week. Twisting consists in combining fibers into heavier strands by means of a frame. The twister must be always alert, walking from one end of her frame to the other, or broken threads will escape her attention, and the work will be injured. Winding the individual fibers on spools ready for the twister also requires watchfulness. The most disagreeable work is roving, which consists in heckling the raw flax just from the bales and full of dirt. Spinning produces some dust, but not so much as is found in the roving rooms. There it is indescribable, although the women say that they finally become so accustomed to it that it does not cause coughing spells, as at first. Such work seems to have its effect on the personal appearance and even modesty of the women. The older, and more abbreviated, and ragged, the garment, the more suitable it is, they think, for such surroundings.

This particular factory is not so dirty as might be expected, for sweepers are continually at work, but they, in turn, scatter dust freely through the air and on the machinery frames and windows. It would seem that devices might be introduced for cleansing purposes which would obviate some of these difficulties.

The nature of this occupation makes the employer dependent upon the most illiterate foreigner for service, as the better type of worker naturally seeks more desirable employment.

In striking contrast to the place described is a ribbon factory where 250 women work. Many of them have been with the firm for years, and were in its employ when the factory was in the downtown district. They are neat in dress and ladylike in conduct, and perform their varied tasks with interest.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

The last process in preparing ribbons for the market is called blocking, and requires many women. It consists in winding the ribbon from the heaped-up mass to a firm position on a block or frame.

Girls are also in the winding department, where quills and bobbins are filled with the spun and twisted threads, already dyed, ready for the warp and woof. Quill winding is the preparing of thread for the warp, and simple winding for the woof. The girls are kept busy joining broken threads, removing bobbins already filled, putting empty bobbins on the revolving axes of the machinery and attaching the thread thereto. Blockers get poor pay, as a rule; skilful winders, the best, with the exception of the weavers. The average for the former is \$4.50, and the latter \$10 a week. Men are employed as warpers and spinners in this establishment.

The factory is clean and orderly; good drinking water is supplied; signs are posted in regard to exit in case of fire; the rooms are very light and airy, and not overcrowded; lockers are provided for wraps; and the toilet rooms are clean and spacious. The employers seem most considerate, and a good spirit prevails in the establishment. Yet it is no easy task the women are called upon to perform. They simply respond to fair, honorable treatment, and are willing to coöperate with their employers in turning out a good article under good conditions.

We have had glimpses of women as they toiled in factories large and small, factories good and bad, and as they pass from view, we see the hundreds of women looking to us for help. They want better wages in all cases, fairer treatment in some, and they need, in addition, shorter hours and better surroundings.

One other class of workers, that which is concerned

## THE NEW YORK WORKER

with paper goods and printing, will serve to illustrate activities different in character from those which have been described, and from this class we have taken the making of boxes, patterns, novelties of various kinds, and printing.

**Paper Goods.** — The making of paper boxes does not appear to rank very high, in the minds of working girls, as an occupation. Those in other paper trades, in binderies, for example, assert that box making attracts an extremely illiterate type of worker. There seems to be some truth in the assertion, if boisterousness and slatternliness constitute an element of this type. Several employers deplored the fact that many clever girls, who could make considerable money in box factories, go to the telephone companies for lower wages, because of the higher social standing of the telephone girl. It is true that many immigrants are in the box trade, and in the same establishment may be found Italians, Jews, Irish, Poles, Bohemians, and Germans, — all maintaining that they hate the trade. Box factories abound in or near tenement-house districts, where they have a constant supply of workers always at hand. Some of these factories are clean, light, and airy, and provide separate toilets, dressing rooms and seats, while others lack all of these highly desirable things. The work generally done by women includes paste work of all kinds, stripping, labeling, finishing, and “setting up.” Pasting is not hard, but extremely monotonous, as it consists in machine feeding largely. Stripping or feeding the cut and bent boxes into a machine which fastens the sides together with paper strips, and requires some skill and swiftness to hold the board in place, seems to be a rather difficult process. The turning-in of the edges is done by hand by very

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

young girls. "Setting up" the box is accomplished by a somewhat dangerous machine process. When one girl was asked if she ever injured her fingers, her reply was that she would not rank as an experienced "setter-up" if she had not crushed them at some time or other. Her maimed hands testified to the truth of this story.

The hours quite generally observed were from eight to half past five or six, with a half-hour for lunch. Several establishments observed a Saturday half-holiday during the summer, and one closed for the entire day. Overtime is usual, and is paid for. Vacations, if given at all, are in every case without pay.

Wages are found to range from \$4 to \$20 a week, the latter sum being earned by several women who were "strippers," and put in a great amount of overtime. There are rush and slack seasons in this trade to influence the earnings, but some factories have a constant demand from certain large firms, and it is always safe to keep such boxes as they require in stock. There seems to be less slack time here than in some so-called "higher class" trades.

It was observed that the girls were obliged to carry heavy piles of box boards some distance, even upstairs to their own work-tables. It would appear that this might be avoided by the use of trundling trucks and elevators. The odor of sour paste, so often found, is extremely disagreeable, and keeps some girls in a state of nausea which must ultimately affect the health.

The other types of work in the group under discussion include publishing houses and pattern and novelty concerns, which may be best presented by describing typical cases in each. To represent the first class, two establishments may be taken, the one representing religious,



## THE NEW YORK WORKER

the other secular, publications. In the first, only work of a religious character is done, — the issuing of Bibles, denominational publications, quarterlies, and books of a high moral tone. Every modern convenience is used, but the machines are very close together in some of the rooms, so that it is difficult to make one's way through the aisles. There is an elevator especially for the employees, and toilets and dressing rooms are provided.

There are nearly a hundred girls here of varying degrees of intelligence and social rank. The women do the usual bindery work, proof-reading, linotyping, and a few run hand-presses, which implies standing all day. The linotypers and proof-readers have nothing whatever to do with the bindery girls, making sharp discriminations wherever possible.

This is not a union shop, yet an eight-hour day, and half a day on Saturday in summer for all, is the rule, and a full hour is allowed for lunch. It compares very well with the other places visited. Printing religious matter is not different from printing anything else, and the conditions under which Bibles are made are similar to those found in the printing and publishing of patent medicine advertisements.

The second establishment prints books and magazines on contract, and is thoroughly modern in its machinery. There are no lunch or rest rooms for the women, but large tea and coffee urns are provided in the bindery, and one of the women is paid by the others to make hot tea and coffee at noon. They eat in the workroom, and so lack the stimulus of a change for even half an hour.

In the bindery, the girls do all the gathering, both by hand and machine, the folding, pasting, stitching, and sewing. Much of this is purely routine work, but some

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

of it, as hand gathering, is fatiguing, since it requires constant walking or standing. On the whole, the processes are clean, with the exception of pasting.

A nine-hour day prevails for the bindery women, but in the summer it is lengthened to nine and a half, five days in the week, to make up for the Saturday half-holiday. The proof-readers and linotypers have an eight-hour day.

Wages conform fairly well to the union scale. Linotypers and proof-readers earn from \$21 to \$23 a week.

An establishment representing the making of paper novelties, such as pictures, frames, and postal cards, has good physical conditions, but the women are young, poorly paid, and seem tired and hopeless. One girl who sorts postal cards all day was asked why she did not seek other employment when this appeared so distasteful, and her reply was, "This is all I can do, — nobody else wants me."

These girls crave amusement, but seem to be resourceless in the matter of finding diversions when work is over, and they are not in touch with the many organizations in the city which are trying to reach working girls. Their tasks are mainly pasting and sorting, both of which are extremely monotonous when pursued from half-past seven in the morning to six at night. They have a Saturday half-holiday in summer for which their pay is docked, a loss they can ill afford. Very few are able to earn more than \$5 a week.

These illustrations will suffice to show what factory work means to girls in New York City. Whether in making clothing, curtains, twine or boxes, or in printing Bibles or sorting postal cards, there is evident an intensity of work that saps the nervous force. Girls are rushing



## THE NEW YORK WORKER

all day long. One sees them on the way to work in the early morning, hurrying on at full speed, and at night they are still nervously rushing, only looking more haggard than when the day's work began. But in spite of this weariness, many seek the stimulus of exciting pleasures and thus feel that they are getting something out of life.

New York has a multiplicity of organizations and institutions maintaining activities designed to benefit the girls who go forth to factory and shop, but, in spite of this, hundreds and hundreds of these young women have never heard that there are any places but questionable dance halls and the streets where they can go at night for rest as well as recreation. Many complain bitterly about starvation wages, who have never heard that women in some trades, perhaps even in their own, are banding themselves together in an attempt to accomplish collectively what they can never accomplish individually. Many know nothing of such things, but many more care nothing. The obligation of society toward them is not lessened, however, because of their ignorance or dull despair. Effort must be redoubled, not relaxed.

The investigation reveals the following facts in regard to betterment undertakings designed especially for young, wage-earning women in New York City. A fuller description of the type of assistance provided is reserved for a later chapter where the chief movements in behalf of industrial groups are discussed.

**Settlement Activities.** — The 41 settlements<sup>1</sup> of which a study was made represent 160 clubs for girls, with a total membership of 2058 for 33 settlements, the other 8

<sup>1</sup> The institutions included are those so denominated by the person in charge. The activities specified are only those for girls over fourteen.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

settlements giving no total membership of their clubs. Twenty-seven of the 41 settlements conduct classes for girls, with an enrolment of 289 for 11 settlements, the other 16 settlements not reporting the total class membership. Twenty-seven of the 41 settlements send girls to summer vacation houses or camps or find boarding places for them in the country.

**Trades Unions.** — There are 34 unions<sup>1</sup> in New York which admit women to membership. Thirty-two of these unions have a membership of 5989.

**Homes for working Women.** — There are in the city 30 special boarding homes providing accommodations for 1650 women. These are designed to meet the needs of poorly paid girls and the rates are consequently low.

**Welfare Work.** — New York has 20 establishments where welfare work for women employees is carried on. Some of the employers report only the provision of a lunch room for women, while others furnish rest and amusement rooms and conduct clubs and classes for both social and educational purposes, and maintain summer homes in the country where girls may spend from one to two weeks at a very moderate price. All of this seems to be, in most cases, an entirely honest effort on the part of the employer to make his wage-earners happier and more efficient. Where wages do not suffer by expenditure in such directions, it would seem that the efforts should not be subject to criticism.

**Clubs.** — The Association of Working Girls' Clubs has 20 organizations here with a membership of 1093.

The above shows the extent of some of the most important betterment movements. All of this, of course,

<sup>1</sup> Since this book went to press, unionism received a great impetus through the shirt-waist makers' strike.

## THE NEW YORK WORKER

seems small when compared with the upwards of half a million women employed, and affords ample ground for the belief that much more might be legitimately accomplished either in connection with existing organizations or by somebody not already in the field.

The accompanying charts are introduced to render more graphic the detailed study of 1476 individual cases selected from seven leading industries.

Charts I and II show the results of an inquiry into the nativity, urban or rural, of the workers grouped by nationality, with the general reason for coming to the city if the girl was of rural origin. But whatever this reason may have been, it was extremely rare to find any one expressing a desire to leave the not unmixed joys of city life for the quiet and calm of the country, assuming that some kind of a living could be made in either place.

Chart III tells the story of working conditions in the factories, classified under three heads. Wages and hours of labor are not considered, the aim being to estimate physical conditions alone.

Chart IV presents the situation so far as 1476 young women, arranged by nationality, are concerned, in regard to favorite amusements. This should stimulate interest in those<sup>1</sup> who are trying to provide decent amusements for wage-earning girls.

Chart V tells the tale of opportunities for social life of the simplest character. Over 60 per cent said they could receive visitors at home, but in too many instances it was difficult to see where the girl could entertain even one. Others again, a small number, belonged to a club, a set-

<sup>1</sup> Since this study was made, valuable work has been done by the Committee on Amusements and Vacation Resources of Working Girls, Mrs. Charles Henry Israels, Chairman.

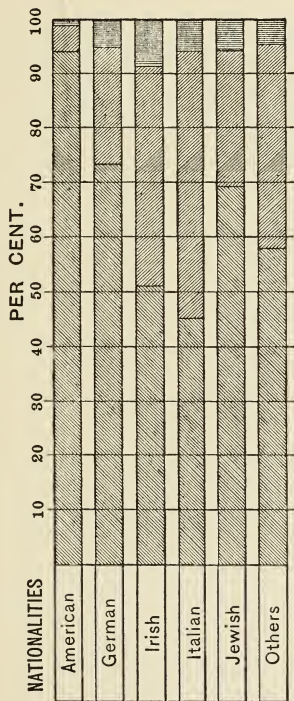
## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

tlement or a church, where they could meet friends. About 35 per cent sorrowfully said the only place they could meet men acquaintances was on the street or in more questionable places. There is a suggestion here for people anxious to aid the working girl.

Chart VI consists of general statistics. The rather large number attending church is explained by a preponderance of Catholics. Nearly 45 per cent of the total number interviewed belonged to that church. The studying specified includes work along both industrial and intellectual lines, 4 per cent doing the former. It is a pleasing indication to find so many girls eager to improve themselves, and this should be an inspiration to non-wage-earners to extend opportunity in all directions.

# CHART I

## NATIVITY



### LEGEND

Urban Nativity

Rural Nativity

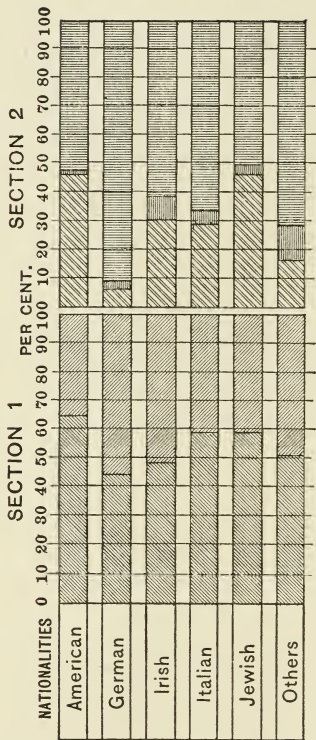
No Information

### NOTES

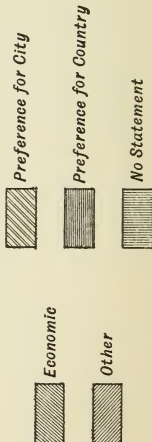
1. An overwhelming majority of those of Urban Nativity were born in New York City.
2. Immigrants not specifying city birth are classed in the Rural group.

# CHART II

## RURAL NATIVITY



### LEGEND

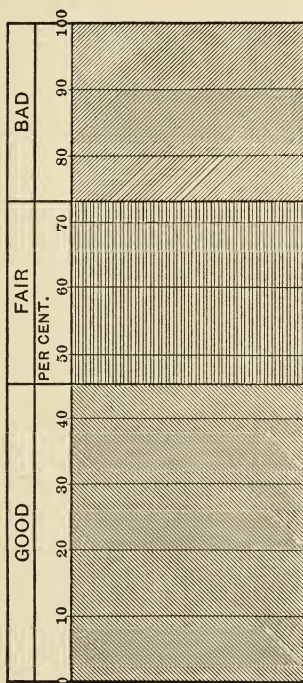


### NOTES

1. Section 1; shows reasons for coming to city, grouped under heads "Economic" and "Other".
2. Section 2; shows preference for city and country respectively and also the proportion unable or unwilling to indicate a choice.

# CHART III

## WORKING CONDITIONS



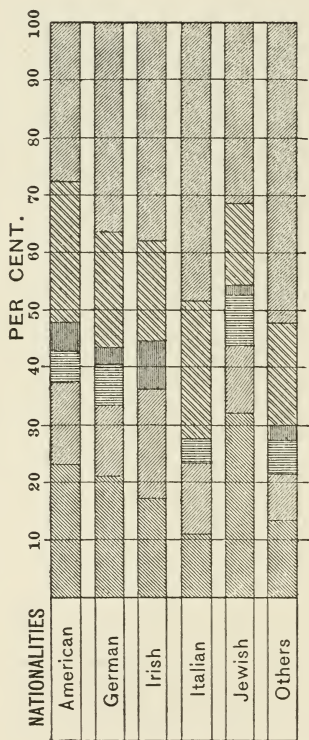
Total of 1476 in 7 Leading Industries.

*NOTE, - Sanitation, Space, Light, Lunch, and Toilet Rooms are considered in judgment.*

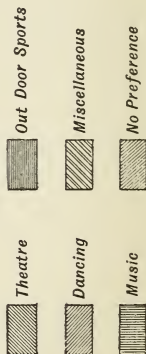


# CHART IV

## FAVORITE AMUSEMENTS



### LEGEND



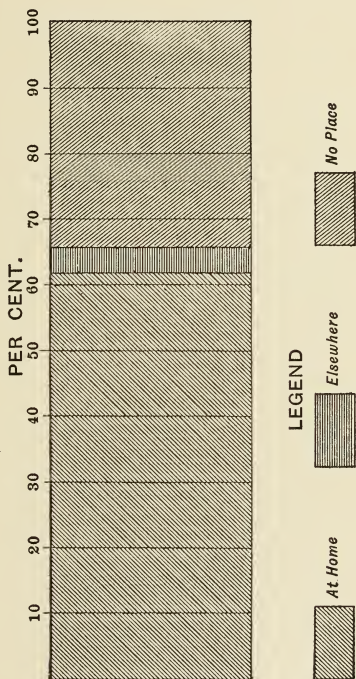
### NOTES

1. No Preference; includes those failing to answer, as well as, stating no preference.
2. In Miscellaneous; are included; - Sewing, Reading, Staying Home, Resting, etc.
3. 50 Jews give reading as a favorite amusement.
4. Other Nationalities, include, - British (except Irish), French, Lithuanians, Greeks, etc.



CHART V

# SOCIAL LIFE



504 out of 1476  
 Young Wage Earning Women  
 have no place to receive their friends.

## CHART VI

### STATISTICS

661 of the 1476 Women earn less than \$7 a Week.

1304 of the 1476 live at Home.

1246 of the 1304 living at Home contribute toward Family Support.

1337 of the 1476 are Single.

57 " " 1476 " Widowed.

66 " " 1476 " Married.

1161 of the 1476 are under Twenty-five Years of Age.

1120 of the 1476 attend Church.

479 of the 1476 are doing Some Studying.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CHICAGO WORKER

CHICAGO, like New York, presents distinct problems, and is not representative of any place but itself, except that, like all great cities, it is at once the opportunity and the undoing of the girl who works for her living in occupations crowded to the portals. The girl as she stands alone, whether in the east or the west, is a poor bargainer, and she is at best an unthinking creature in need of wiser guidance than the impulses of youth give her.

Over 100,000 women contribute their labor to the industrial life of Chicago. This is approximately about one-third the number of men wage-earners in the same city, and also upwards of one-third the number of women found at work in New York. The women working in the two cities are grinding away at pretty much the same sort of thing in the busy season and in the slack, and all struggling hard with the problem of making a living.

Our study in Chicago carried us into very large factories, while in New York we followed girls into numerous comparatively small ones. In the former city, the big establishments remind one of the great places in New England employing many hundreds of women. The factories have grown up in congested foreign sections to a considerable extent, thus putting them within easy reach of cheap labor. Certain firms in the clothing business operate several factories in different parts of the city, thus getting cheaper help because no car fares need to be

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

paid. Some have concluded that the employers thus effect a weekly saving in wages about equal to the car fare of each worker. If this be true, it would seem excellent business management for the firms and quite as advantageous for the girl. But an ethical question might well be raised. Is not the value of the work performed the same whether transportation has to be paid or not? In a thoroughly organized trade such quibbling would not occur.

The working conditions of 30,000 women formed our study in the second city in the country, — second in population, but third in the total value of manufactured products. From the making of garments, the stores, and the metal-working trades, we can learn much of the women in whom our interest centers. There are statistical details for 1914 women in 52 establishments, and these are presented later to show tendencies in certain directions.

First let us look at the garment workers as they toil through the long day in non-union shops. The shops or trades that are organized naturally have better working conditions and higher wages than those that are not, since the unions have established very definite standards in these respects. Our study was therefore confined to those establishments in which the workers had no such guarantee of immunity from the unfortunate phases of industry as that furnished by union contracts. It is true, of course, that some non-union shops present as good conditions as union establishments can boast, but there can be no certainty of their continuance when the employer alone has the power of determining the character of his establishment.

**Clothing.** — This term is used here to include men's and boys' garments and women's underwear, and we

## THE CHICAGO WORKER

confined ourselves to eight establishments employing approximately 1000 women — a small proportion, it is true, of the full 30,000 women engaged in this industry, but the places visited were representative. Employers were extremely loath to allow any investigation to be made, and they seemed unduly sensitive on the wages question. It was possible, however, to learn much of a section of this most important industry so far as women are concerned. Employees were seen at their work places, and in their homes, and many of them talked freely upon what industrial life meant to them. Very few seemed satisfied. Their dissatisfaction was not always caused by low wages, or long hours, but by petty annoyances connected with the trade. As an example of the tyranny of offensive customs, the case of one rather conspicuous establishment employing about 300 women may be cited. Among the workers were the newly arrived immigrants from Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary, but the majority were Poles, Bohemians, and Scandinavians born in the environs of their present workshop. A large percentage of these speak English but little, and understand only the simplest words. It would be difficult to find a place with better physical conditions. The wages, too, are higher than those found in many factories, and there are seldom long slack seasons, but the rules of the house, the restrictions placed upon the employees, and the petty annoyances to which they are subjected are most distressing to girls who have the energy and intelligence to resent them.

There was an oppressive atmosphere of dull, stupid endurance, and the faces of most of the women were pitifully blank. There was abundant evidence of lack of opportunity for promotion, of ceaseless mechanical work,

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

of colorless, uneventful lives, and all this with good physical conditions and fairly good wages. "Girls are unreasonable," said the employer; "what more can they want?" They want an absence of fines for imperfect work for one thing, and the employer to furnish thread and needles for another. But he does not see the force of these old contentions. The buying of thread or needles or both is a constant source of irritation to the more intelligent workers of the needle trades in the West as in the East. In several Chicago establishments, this was found to amount to about \$2 a week for those using one-needle machines, and it falls heavier on the two- and three-needle operators, who pay sometimes from \$2.50 to \$3 a week for their thread. It is the old, old story heard in various parts of the country, and filling the worker with a revolutionary spirit whenever it is told. The girls insist that the garment is sold with the thread, and the profit goes to the employer. An added grievance is that employees are required to buy thread from the firm. When questioned about this one girl smiled satirically and answered: "Sure, that's the way they make their money. We could get it much cheaper at a store."

Another thing which all resent is the lack of liberty. The piece-workers are especially rebellious because they are required to be ready for work at half-past seven in the morning on pain of dismissal, and because they cannot leave any time during the day they wish, or when work is so slack that there is nothing for them to do. They argue that since they are piece-workers, their presence in the factory should not be required when the firm has not sufficient work to keep them busy, and that they should not be compelled to stay in the building idle unless paid for their time. In one factory, a girl

## THE CHICAGO WORKER

said : "I finished all I had to do three hours ago, and now I sit and fold my hands. My mother is washing at home and would be glad to have me there. I don't see why I should have to stay here when it does not do the manager any good or me either."

Thus do they complain. They want first a chance to work, and then some voice in regard to the disposal of their time. In many factory processes, there are delays, often unexpected, and often unavoidable, which bring hardship to the piece-worker. The young girl cannot see why she should sit idle before a silent machine, when the alluring world outside is calling to her. In some places, girls are not permitted to go home for sickness unless it is an illness sufficiently serious to frighten the superintendent. One girl advanced the theory that it is because of fear lest they seek employment elsewhere that they are not allowed to leave during working hours.

The week workers are really less restricted than the piece-workers. Many of them are little girls, finishers, packers, and inspectors, who laugh and sing while they do their work, and seem to feel restraint less than the older girls.

In a corset factory, where there is a graduated piece rate for all operations, the girls insist that this rate is constantly being lowered by changes in fashion so that one has to work almost twice as hard as she did a year or two ago to make the same amount of money. The new-style garment is nearly twice as long as the old. The women receive the same rate for sewing the long seams as formerly for the short ones, and they say that whereas some of the best workers used to make \$12 and \$18 it is now impossible for a girl, working all the time at the highest possible speed, to make more than \$10 a



## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

week unless she has exceptional energy and endurance. This is only another instance of the hardships freakish changes in fashion have forced upon women in industry.

The working conditions in most of the shops are generally fairly good. They are clean enough and well lighted. The air is not bad in summer when the windows are open, but there seems to be little attempt at artificial ventilation, with the result that the rooms are often foul in winter. There are, however, few among the employees who seem to understand the necessity for fresh air. Even in summer, there is a persistent odor, in some places, of gas from the gas iron, and when the doors and windows are closed, it is very distressing. This is especially true in the tailoring shops. It would seem that there is careless neglect in this matter. There ought to be some way of preventing the escape of gas. One of the girls working in such a place spoke of the difficulty she had in breathing during the winter. Like many factory girls she is afraid of draughts, and objects to open windows ; but she believes that if the foreman or some one in authority were to insist upon having the windows lowered a little at the top, the draught would not be serious, and the girls would stop wrangling over the subject. All through the year, the windows are closed before the employees leave at night and remain so until after work begins in the morning, if they are opened at all.

In one place, there were two little Italian girls who were undoubtedly under fourteen years of age. In another shop, there were several Polish children who gave their ages as fifteen, but they were much younger, judging from appearances. These children cut and sewed on tags. Their work is not hard, and the foreman is considerate and kind to them, but they have to stand all day. When his atten-



## THE CHICAGO WORKER

tion was called to this he said that they could not conveniently do their work sitting, but he afterwards admitted that he had never thought how injurious constant standing might be to girls of that age and said he would provide seats for them. They are paid from \$2.50 to \$3 a week.

Almost without exception, the girls said they spent their free time at home helping their mothers. Among the older girls there is strong class feeling. There are many newly arrived immigrants who do not speak English, and the foreman of one factory said that almost every day he hires a new girl who is still on the ocean. The immigrants who drift into these shops are ignorant and dull, and too often the native-born are not far in advance. There are a few bright girls, some of whom are studying hard at various things outside of their working hours, and many who say that they read a great deal, while others had never heard of the public library or its various branches.

As has been indicated before, much discontent prevails among the workers in this trade. The chief complaints of the girls in the clothing establishments have not to do with wages, although in many instances there is seemingly good ground for complaint on this score. The weekly earnings range from \$2.50 to \$12, with an average in the neighborhood of \$7. The girls protest most against the long day, and the effects of this and the nervous strain of their work are decidedly noticeable. It appears in heavy eyes with deep, dark rings, in wrinkled skin, and old young faces. The high rate of speed that must be maintained through so many successive hours is undermining the health of thousands of girls in this industry.

Another grievance is overtime in the busy season. The girls are required to work until half-past seven or eight o'clock two or three nights a week. They usually stay at

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

their machines through the supper hour and send boys out to bring them a bite to eat. This is done to save time in the hope of getting through a little earlier. They seem to resent this overtime requirement quite as much as the inevitable slack seasons, which amount to about twelve weeks in the year.

The employees ordinarily have to pay for goods damaged in the making, and one rather interesting method was found to prevail in a firm operating several factories. Each shop is given into the care of a foreman who hires, directs, and manages everything in his particular establishment and is responsible to the firm for output, pay-roll, and quality of goods. He is held responsible for faulty work, and employees are made to understand that their carelessness causes him financial loss. When any serious damage, that cannot be concealed, occurs, the foreman arranges with the person responsible, to raffle the garment when completed, the supposition being that the money resulting will be used for the purchase of cloth to replace that which was spoiled. But, as a matter of fact, the system proves profitable both to the foreman and to the firm, inasmuch as tickets at ten cents each are sold up to the retail value of the garment. Employees are generous in buying, each one knowing her turn may come some day. The tax on the individual is light, and does not seem to be regarded as a hardship, while a five-cent fine for a half-hour's tardiness in the morning is considered an outrage in the places where such a custom still prevails.

The women who make clothes are at the mercy of circumstances they do not understand, and cannot control as individuals. Their helplessness should commend them particularly to the kindly interest of well-to-do women at home whose hands are now freed from the needle because

## THE CHICAGO WORKER

of the girl in the shop. The girls' rather frantic occasional endeavors to help themselves should not be condemned. They are doing the best they can, and should be helped whenever it is possible for outsiders to lend a hand.

**The Department Stores.**—The stores furnish a vast field of employment to women, and one of great attractiveness, coupled with serious dangers to many. The work requires no skill, and so positions are easily accessible to the girl who must work and does not know how to do anything in particular, and, perhaps, feels a bit above taking her chances in a factory. The life of a "saleslady" seems most alluring to many young girls. They see only the delight of being more or less dressed up, on exhibition in fact, all the time. All this is so much more inviting than guiding a sewing-machine in a dingy loft or pasting labels on cans in a miserable basement, that the possible opportunities in factory work are rarely considered by a certain class. The store offers infinitely greater advantages, girls think, and they look down on the factory operative, as she in turn looks down on the domestic servant.

We studied, in all, nineteen stores employing nearly 17,000 women. This list includes a few shops, outside of the loop or downtown district, in populous, outlying sections. The conditions in these places vary from good to very bad. Some stores have considerable prestige and pay poor wages, while others have no prestige and pay higher wages. In some, there is every reasonable provision made for the care of the workers; there are elevators and cloak rooms and rest rooms, and light and air and cleanliness; others provide none of these things adequately.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

The question of wages is always a difficult one to answer. Employers in stores seem to be much more sensitive on the subject than factory owners. The latter will, on occasion, reveal their pay-rolls, but it would require unusual pressure to induce the merchant to do so. Then again, experience with thousands of employees leads to the belief that shop girls are more likely to quote fictitious averages than are their factory sisters. The saleswoman comes in constant touch with the outside world and has learned to be wary, if not actually untruthful. The moral effect of certain types of stores must be most disastrous to girls, for they are instructed to tell the customer anything to insure a sale: "You will get it this afternoon," for example, when in the natural course of events the article just purchased will not be delivered till the following morning. Then, too, they are frequently told to misrepresent values of things offered at a special price. So it is not surprising that they tend to get the real and imaginary wage confused in their own minds. One has to become pretty well acquainted with a large number of girls in order to know very much about their incomes. Rather intimate acquaintance with this particular occupation in Chicago for a number of years enables me to state unhesitatingly that wages in the stores are unduly low. Every establishment can exultingly point to examples of women earning anywhere from \$15 to \$25 or more a week, but the overwhelming majority get nearer \$3 than \$30. The system of payment here varies from a flat weekly rate to a minimum sum plus a regular commission on sales, or to a maximum sum plus a small commission for special sales or for busy seasons. Several stores offer \$2.50 a week plus commission. In departments like millinery, dress goods, and suits, the commis-

## THE CHICAGO WORKER

sion amounts to considerable in the busy seasons, while in other departments, such as notions and small wares, a girl cannot earn much at any time. Cash girls and wrappers quite generally start on \$2.50 and \$3 a week, while entry clerks are paid about \$1 more.

In 959 cases, exclusive of cash girls, selected from the various departments of the nineteen stores, the weekly earnings ranged from \$2.50 to \$24, but only in one instance does the maximum sum appear and the recipient was a woman thirty-one years of age. A few, only twenty-eight in all, report from \$15 to \$20 a week. A slightly larger proportion show a weekly income of from \$10 to \$15, while the remaining women hover perilously near to \$5. Only thirty-three of the entire number paid nothing at all for living expenses. The department-store workers as a whole are underpaid. They have to make a good appearance or they cannot get or hold their places. Thus the cost of dress is greater than for the poorly paid factory girl. It is plain, too, that the girl behind the counter, in a store catering to wealthy patrons, is likely to acquire tastes out of keeping with her income. It is a hard life at best, and yet one greatly sought after by girls who must work, but who desire an occupation that seems to carry with it some social distinction in the working world.

Not only are the wages in the stores low, but the hours are long. The day in the downtown district begins at eight or a half-hour later and ends at six or half-past six. Some close a half-hour earlier during two summer months, and have only a half-day on Saturday. The lunch period is usually half or three-quarters of an hour. The working day for the girl, however, is much longer than these hours would indicate, as she must be in her place from ten to fifteen minutes before the time for opening and

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

frequently is required to remain to put away stock after the store is technically closed. The amount of overtime varies with the shop and the department. Some girls have to stay until eight or nine o'clock several nights in the week, and, in those places making a feature of bargain sales, some saleswomen are obliged to remain every night to get things ready for the following day. In more than one store they receive no pay and not even supper for this overtime, and they do not have a chance to buy food for themselves until the work is completed.

The girls in stores in the outlying districts work until nine or ten at night, even in the dull season. Custom keeps the places open when it seems questionable business policy. This long day of the saleswoman means almost constant standing. The absence of enough seats to conform to the state law is noticeable even in the best stores, in some departments, and it is a great cause for complaint.

Some firms give employees of at least a year's standing a week's vacation with pay, but the custom is not at all general. Many of the stores make a feature of welfare work and in these, of course, the women have greater physical comforts. Employees' lunch rooms of one kind or another are common; mutual benefit associations are not rare; and even choral societies are found.

It must be remembered that the employer is not responsible for all the hardships of the saleswoman's life. The idle shopper contributes her quota. Women with time hanging heavy on their hands often haunt the shops with no idea of purchasing, and weary the clerks by useless questions. This is especially true in stores where politeness to all is an iron-clad rule. In the lower grade of shop where courtesy is not a requirement, the clerk suffers less from the annoyance of the shop tramp. A



## THE CHICAGO WORKER

few well-chosen epithets aimed at the tormentor will usually leave the girl behind the counter free to pat her mounds of hair and otherwise arrange her toilet, — or to serve legitimate purchasers. The nervous strain of selling goods in crowded city stores is serious under the best conditions, but when purposeless shoppers persist in making unreasonable demands, the position of the saleswoman is no enviable one. The girl in the factory speeding at her machine to the limit of her endurance has no other individual to consider, but the girl who sells the article must ordinarily work as swiftly as possible and, at the same time, be polite to a number of more or less unreasonable women. Perhaps the girls resent most of all the one who in a patronizing way asks if they are tired, or how much wages they get. This does not mean that they do not appreciate a genuine interest in their welfare.

The saleswoman is ever before the shopping public, condemned, commiserated, sometimes praised, but always wearing her life out in the midst of the crowd, while away from the gaze of men are other groups of girls enduring hardships peculiarly their own. One of these groups for which we ask consideration is the one in which may be classed those engaged in working with electrical appliances and somewhat similar products.

**The Metal Workers.** — One great electrical establishment will serve to illustrate difficulties that seem to inhere in the metal-working trades. The general working conditions in this factory are good. There is an honest effort to keep the place clean, to ventilate it, to guard the machinery, and to make the girls satisfied with their surroundings. So far as it was possible to observe, it seemed that the foremen and forewomen were well chosen, considerate, and well liked. The girls took occasion to

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

speak of their appreciation of their employers, often speaking enthusiastically. But there are many things not conducive to the health of the workers, most of which could probably be avoided. The buildings are filled with so many kinds of machinery that the whole structure throbs constantly. The braiding machine department, where the silk covering is woven around the electrical cord, is particularly noisy and the vibration almost unbearable. The effect upon those who spend nine hours a day in such surroundings must of necessity be bad. Even when one has become accustomed to the noise, and there is no apparent result at the time, there must inevitably be a breakdown when the nerves of a frail girl will rebel against this particular strain. One foreman said that these machines are among the noisiest made, but that there is no way to remedy the difficulty. It would seem, however, in this age, when nothing is impossible to the inventor, that the worst might at least be mitigated. Surely it would not be so hard to make a small improvement for the safety and the health of the employees as to construct a machine which will do the work of this one.

The department which manufactures a certain type of electrical lamp carries with it injurious conditions. Most of the work is done by hand, but there is one part of the operation which requires the use of a gas machine in a dark room. This emits an intense blue flame in which two pieces of glass are held until they melt, when a mold is brought down, welding them together. The work is extremely trying to the eyes, and many of the girls wear glasses. There are ventilating windows opening into the outer room, and a skylight is ordinarily open, but always screened to keep out the light. An odor of gas seems to



## THE CHICAGO WORKER

pervade the room all the time. The workers in this department receive the highest wages of any women in the factory. One girl was found who makes from \$19 to \$33 a week, but she said she felt sick all the time. And who can wonder? Society demands all kinds of conveniences for lighting and communication, but apparently has no thought of the human wreckage too often involved in the processes connected with supplying these.

In another industry in the group under consideration, certain firms admit that they have to employ what they call low-type Lithuanians, because they alone can stand the wear and tear. They say the American girl could not endure the labor two days, but the Lithuanian women work in the factory all day and often take in washing in the evening in addition to keeping boarders. One place where such women work was filthy beyond belief, the heat sickening, and the noise deafening. There were no dressing rooms, only three little partially screened stalls with a few pegs on which to hang clothes. One noon, three girls were found lying on the floor of each stall resting, while the others had to wait because there was no space for them.

Still another factory carrying on processes difficult for women presents a different character. Here there is ample light, and air, and space, with excellent dressing rooms. A room is provided where the girls may eat the lunch they bring from home, tea and coffee being served free. A visiting woman physician is engaged by the firm to go through the factory and examine the girls personally to ascertain their physical condition. A social club of girls in charge of this woman physician meets for dancing and general good times. At Christmas, each employee receives a bonus of 10 per cent of her earnings for the entire year. As no one earns less than \$6 a week and some earn as high as \$12 and

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

\$14, the amount so distributed is large. The working day is nine and one-half hours with no overtime. There is a Saturday half-holiday in the summer, and vacation is allowed to those who wish it, but it is not paid for by the employer. The girls on the whole are well treated and comfortable.

Thus do the burdened days go on in hundreds of factories and stores throughout the city, unmindful as the machinery that girls are daily being rendered unfit for the duties of wifehood and motherhood by the industrial processes of which they are such a vital part. Thoughtful people, of course, are not unmindful of this, and in various movements are trying to offset the disastrous influence of toil under unfavorable conditions.

While it is the purpose here to reserve for a special chapter a discussion of conspicuous movements in behalf of wage-earning women, something of the scope of the larger efforts in Chicago may be learned from the following statement in regard to certain activities :

**Settlements.** — There are twenty settlements<sup>1</sup> and institutional churches in Chicago which undertake betterment work for young wage-earning women. Fifteen of these have a total number of seventy clubs, with a membership of over 2000. Nineteen of the settlements and churches conduct classes, and only one of these keeps no record of the number and membership of its classes ; the total number of classes for the other eighteen settlements and churches is 131, with a membership of 1717 for 92 classes ; the membership of the other 39 classes was not given. All but four of the settlements and churches send

<sup>1</sup> Difficulties frequently arise in connection with compiling such figures. Some institutions, usually included under the head of "settlements," refused to be so considered, claiming that they were "missions," or "schools," and so they were omitted from the list. However, the figures are presented as approximately correct.

## THE CHICAGO WORKER

girls to summer vacation homes or camps or arrange for some outing for their members.

**Trade Unions.** — Twenty-seven unions in Chicago admit women to membership. Twenty-two of these have a membership of 7470.

**Homes for Working Women.** — Sixteen of these special boarding places exist and accommodate over 1200 at rates varying between \$2.75 and \$5.

**Welfare Work.** — Thirty establishments were found in which the employers were conducting various kinds of betterment work.

**Clubs.** — The Association of Working Girls' Clubs, so active in the East, has no branch here, but many local clubs maintain lunch rooms and classes and are worthy of commendation.

These opportunities seem pitifully small when compared with the tens of thousands who must be without the pale.

Glimpses of the life and possible needs of 1914 women in six industries in Chicago are given in the following statistics, which are presented in connection with a study of 1476 cases in New York, as some interesting comparisons may be made :

		NEW YORK 1476 Cases	CHICAGO 1914 Cases
Nationality	Americans	735	1295
	Jews	373	179
	Germans	81	138
	British	93	118
	Italians	148	*
	Poles	*	60
	Scandinavians	*	41
	Others	40	81
	Not given	6	2

\* The number being small has been included in "Others."

# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

		NEW YORK 1476 Cases	CHICAGO 1914 Cases
Age	Under 25 years of age	1161	1482
	Not given	20	141
Wages	Earning less than \$7 per week	661	753
	Not given	10	55
Living arrangements	Living at home	1304	1618
	Number of those living at home who contribute to family support	1246	1543
Conjugal condition	Single	1337	1730
	Married	66	74
	Widowed	57	67
	Divorced, deserted, or separated	5	22
	Not given	11	21
Opportunities for study	Pursuing study of some sort	479	281
	Using libraries	396	324
Favorite amusement <sup>1</sup>	Theater	356	356
	Dancing	185	290
	Outdoor amusements and athletics	92	220
	Music	82	200
	Sewing and reading	121	247
	Miscellaneous amusements	217	169
	No preference expressed	466	500
Church affiliation	Protestant	327	615
	Catholic	659	641
	Jewish	86	96
	Attending church but specifying no denomination	48	405
	Not given	356	157

<sup>1</sup> The discrepancy between the total number of amusements and the number of women interviewed is accounted for by the fact that in New York 43 persons and in Chicago 68 expressed two preferences.

## THE CHICAGO WORKER

As has been stated before, a great deal is being done now for the wage-earning women of Chicago by various groups, and types of organizations. Lunch and social clubs are numerous in the center of the city and classes are held in various places. Kind employers, interested individuals, more or less militant unions, and the state itself, are taking a hand in the movement for the improvement of conditions, but here as elsewhere much still remains to be accomplished.

## CHAPTER V

### WOMEN IN NEW JERSEY TOWNS

NEW JERSEY is interesting to the student of the wage-earning class, both on account of its dominant industrial interests, and its proximity to two of the country's great manufacturing centers, which in turn tend to lure, by their supposedly greater attractiveness, ambitious workers from this state. The nearness of the largest cities to New York on the one hand, and Philadelphia on the other, may account for some of the unrest evident among many employees, and also for the lack of betterment undertakings. That is, these cities tend to become merely suburban to the greater ones, and are thus victims of that divided interest which is inevitable where business and residence are widely separated.

Many working women look with longing eyes to the skyscrapers of Manhattan as the goal of their industrial ambition, and clerks and stenographers by the hundreds rush over the ferries morning and night, and glory in the whirl that draws them into the nation's greatest business center. But the unskilled factory girl ordinarily must stay at home, and seek employment near at hand. Thus the working women of the state under consideration may be divided into two classes, those who toil within and those who toil without.

It is with the former class that this study deals. But the population is so largely a manufacturing one that a story of the wage-earners is virtually a story of the people

## WOMEN IN NEW JERSEY TOWNS

of the state. Out of a total of upwards of two millions, we find over three-quarters of a million working daily for wages, and of these nearly 150,000 are women sixteen years of age and over. These women are found in most of the industries represented, but they appear in greatest numbers in the making of food and cigars, clothing, textiles, and paper goods, and in the potteries.

It is the purpose here to limit the account of women wage-earners to the silk-mills and the potteries because both of these interests are large. Silk is the most important of the textile industries, and according to censuses taken in 1900 and 1905, New Jersey ranked first in the whole country in the value of her silk products. There are approximately 60,000 people working in silk-mills in the United States, and nearly half of these are women, of whom New Jersey contributes more than a third. Thus the state presents a promising field for the study of women who help to make silk products.

The case of the potteries is similar. New Jersey ranks second in this industry, Ohio ranking first with its scores of establishments, a number of which produce ware of great artistic value. In the former state, the output is largely the more usual commercial articles without great esthetic merit. Just because this is so, the condition of the workers should be of great moment to the average consumer, who must use ordinary china and other household crockery. Narrow and selfish interests might lead us to be more concerned for the women who make goods in constant use in our homes than in those things remote from our daily lives. If every consumer would insist that the articles in common use in his home should be made under wholesome conditions, there would be no more vile,

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

unsanitary shops, no more degrading toil for women, provided only that the insistence be made effective by combination. But, as such united endeavor presupposes more highly socialized individuals than those constituting the majority in most communities, other undertakings must be regarded as socially valuable. Where elimination of industrial ills is not immediately possible, their amelioration must be insisted upon.

In proceeding first to a consideration of the workers engaged in making various kinds of silk goods, it may be well to outline the types of work which utilize women. They are chiefly spinning, winding, warping, and weaving, with the allied processes.

Dyeing is usually done by men, while spinning, which calls for no special skill, and is poorly paid, is largely turned over to children and very young girls. The same is true of "lacing," a process necessary in winding "hard" or natural silk for the dyer. Children divide the skeins into four or five strands and lace a string in and out and back again to prevent snarling. They work swiftly, but rarely earn more than \$3.50 a week. Winding, like other textile winding processes, consists in transferring, by machinery, the spun silk to spools for the shuttle. The worker's task is one of guidance and careful watching, in addition to keeping the frame supplied with fresh spools. One girl frequently watches fifty or more separate threads at a time, joining broken ones and otherwise adjusting them.

Warping, or preparing the thread in the loom for weaving, also requires close attention from the operator, in order that imperfections in the finished product may be avoided.

The foregoing processes differ somewhat with dyed



## WOMEN IN NEW JERSEY TOWNS

and undyed silks. The latter is not so pleasant to work with as the former on account of a disagreeable odor resulting from the process of removing a certain sizing by plunging the silk in a hot chemical solution and subsequently drying it by artificial heat. Owing to this unpleasantness, work with undyed silk does not, as a rule, attract the better class of workers. It is noticeable everywhere that objectionable features, such as bad odors or filth in an industry, tend to drive out the more intelligent women, who seek pleasanter surroundings, even though less remunerative.

Most of the work in silk-mills, however, is not objectionable in itself, although it may easily become so if carried on in foul air and poorly kept rooms. Fresh air and cleanliness go far towards making any textile process less of a hardship to the women who labor in the industry. The women themselves are usually the last to realize the disastrous effects of unsanitary workshops, and the thoughtful employer frequently meets opposition from the very women whom he desires to help. But more often than not, the manufacturer is much more concerned about the output of the mills than the physical and moral well-being of his employees.

Another process is "picking," which pays uniformly only about \$6 a week, although it requires close application and great care. The woven fabric is passed over to girls who are supplied with sharp pincers and clippers, and they carefully examine every piece, clipping off stray threads, ends, or knots wherever they appear. In order to do the work thoroughly, many use magnifying glasses, and find it extremely trying to the nerves, as it requires the closest attention. All the processes in fact call for a degree of watchfulness which

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

means considerable strain. The girls who weave gorgeous plaid silks have an unusual number of bobbins to follow and complain of great nervousness. They start and tremble at the slightest unusual sound; and their faces twitch as the threads shoot in and out to form the bright designs. The lover of gay plaids rarely knows that young life has lost its vigor and young faces have become lined in their making.

It is young life in the silk-mills in our New Jersey towns, for the average age in many factories is not more than twenty. The girls are, in the main, alert and keen when they enter the mills, and those in the simpler forms of the industry retain their buoyancy in spite of poor working conditions and low wages.

The wages, except for the weavers, are low. Even including the most highly paid, the average is well below \$7 a week when employment is fairly regular, as may be seen from the following statement based on a canvass of 300 workers, representing seven distinct processes.

FORM OF OCCUPATION	AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE
Spinning . . . . .	\$ 5.00
Winding . . . . .	7.50
Warping . . . . .	6.00
Picking . . . . .	6.00
Weaving . . . . .	10.00
Lacing . . . . .	3.50
Cutting . . . . .	3.50

The mere statement should be sufficient to convince any thinking person that wages are too low to permit a girl to be self-supporting and self-respecting. These workers are not "pin money" girls, but young women who must take care of themselves, and frequently help to

## WOMEN IN NEW JERSEY TOWNS

bear family burdens as well. It would seem that every reasonable effort should be made to place these girls on a higher economic plane. If technical training would enable the girl to be more valuable to her employer, and enable her to earn higher wages, then, undoubtedly, it should be furnished, either in connection with the public schools or in private classes. Employers are prone to say that young girls are not worth the insignificant sums they do earn, owing to their lack of skill and consequent wastefulness. If this be true, immediate steps should be taken to remedy the difficulty. If heedless young creatures are ruining their lives because they have not been taught properly, the burden of wrong must fall upon society.

But the silk-mill operatives are not more in need of assistance in this particular than those in the other group with which we are concerned in the state.

The potteries contribute their quota of low-skilled and underpaid workers, but the situation here is somewhat different. The women naturally fall into two classes,—the decorators or privileged group, and the other workers. The former seem to have a good deal of freedom in their hours, and are very intelligent young women. Their work consists in the printing of papers with lead colors to transfer to china, called decalcomania work, rubbing, printing, and, finally, the filling in and gilding of the ware. The decalcomaning and gilding yield the highest wage, and furnish the most skilled work for women in the industry. Other types of work for women are the processes known as

(1) Dipping, which consists in wetting the biscuit ware, so called after the first firing, in the glaze. The girls wear rubber gloves to protect their hands from the spattering which is liable to occur, and as there is some

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

lead in the glaze it might be dangerous if they did not exercise care.

(2) Cleaning, that is, brushing and shaking off the dust which becomes free in the firing, and accumulates in the trays used for carrying the appliances. The girls tip the contents of the trays on tables in front of them, and clean each individual piece ready for sorting. An unusual amount of dust is raised in the cleaning process, and many wear caps, and in other ways try to protect themselves. As the glaze contains lead, and the china more flint than porcelain, the dust which arises would be injurious if precautions were not taken. In the best places, exhaust pipes are attached to the table at which the girls stand, and there is an outlet in front of each girl with a draft sufficiently strong to carry off a large part of the waste particles.

In one establishment where the ware was particularly rough, the women found it necessary to use sandpaper before the brush. This was very hard on the hands. Most of them had their knuckles bound in rags, and, even then, they were bleeding. One big brush which was attached to a machine for cleaning large pieces was placed near a window. Otherwise there was no means of collecting or discharging the excessive dust, and this is the condition in too many instances.

(3) Dressing, which consists in knocking off and smoothing imperfections in the china made by the imprint of the support upon which the dish rests when in the kiln. The workers usually sit on low boxes surrounded by piles of dishes within easy reach. They can work rapidly this way, but their positions are often very uncomfortable.

(4) Sorting, or selecting the perfect pieces and arrang-

## WOMEN IN NEW JERSEY TOWNS

ing them according to shape and size for packing. It will be seen that such tasks as have been outlined are physically hard rather than nerve-wearing.

It is true that certain unhealthful conditions prevail in most potteries, and employers recognize their existence and attempt to excuse them on the ground of "conditions peculiar to the industry." There will be dust, unless proper devices for carrying it off are installed, and it is said that even such devices are not entirely satisfactory. In addition to this, some workers are constantly subjected to changes in temperature, while others stand in wet clay throughout the day. Occasionally girls wear overshoes, but those are uncomfortable at best. The same conditions prevail in Ohio and Pennsylvania; and in the establishment where the five-hundred-dollar vase of rare beauty is made there is liable to be a room, cold, damp, and dust-laden, where slatternly girls are molding clay and fattening the germs of disease. This is only the old tale. The finished product gives no hint of the horrors often following in the wake of the processes contributing to its beauty.

The wages of the pottery women are low, only an inferior grade of skill being required for most of the work. The minimum and maximum earnings for the different processes are presented here, and from these it will be evident that the average wage in all does not much exceed \$6 a week when there is no slack season.

Dipping	yields from	\$4.50 to \$ 6.00
Cleaning or brushing	yields from	4.00 to 7.00
Dressing	yields from	3.00 to 7.00
Printing and transferring	yields from	7.00 to 12.00
Sorting or selecting	yields from	4.50 to 6.00
Gilding	yields from	6.00 to 12.00

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

Nature was most generous in giving New Jersey clay and girls for the potteries. It remains for man in return to render more favorable the conditions under which the latter must work with the former. It may be said that women are decreasing in this trade except as decorators. Man's greater strength is found more desirable.

Altogether the New Jersey investigation covered four cities and included detailed information concerning 824 individual workers, of whom 722 were unmarried. Of this number 460 were Americans, 141 British, 18 Jewish, 66 Italian, 64 German, and the remaining 75 came from seven different countries, as widely remote as Greece and Sweden. Seventy-eight per cent of these women were under twenty-five years of age and only 9 per cent over thirty-five. Forty-seven per cent earned less than \$7 a week, when work was constant, while 87 per cent lived at home. This does not mean that all these women were merely working for "pin money." The great majority of them helped to maintain the family. It was found that of the 714 living at home, 657, or 92 per cent, contributed to family support; 538 turned all their wages into the general fund; and only 22 of the entire number paid nothing for board at home, and apparently had all they earned to spend on themselves.

Fewer than half of these women worked in factories that could be characterized as good, while fully a third worked day by day in extremely bad places. This has reference to physical rather than to moral conditions, although unfavorable physical conditions are liable to bring about unfortunate developments in the realm of morality.

These New Jersey workers manifested considerable interest in the question of amusements, and when asked to state their favorite form, it developed that dancing took

## WOMEN IN NEW JERSEY TOWNS

first place, with theater-going a close second. But their interest in the great outdoors was slight, notwithstanding the fact that, living as they do in cities of moderate size, they could easily reach the open country. It is true that their hours of work are long, from seven to six as a rule, and there is little daylight left in which to enjoy outdoor life. The evening, therefore, becomes the time for recreation, and evening pastimes must be accepted. So dancing and theater-going occupy a large place in their lives.

Naturally girls earning in the neighborhood of \$7 a week have little to spend on pleasures, so they must take those which are cheapest, regardless of their worth. The younger girls maintained that men friends took them out at night, and that they were not obliged to spend their own money. This is undoubtedly true, but the financial ability of the men friends to take them to high-class entertainments may well be questioned.

These girls, like all others, crave pleasure, and they should have it. Good, clean, wholesome fun is better for them after their monotonous toil than instruction in academic subjects can ever be. The wife of one employer was found taking a very vital interest in the young women and skilfully devising wholesome pleasures for them. Her work seemed to be appreciated.

The women workers of this state need first of all better working conditions, and employers should be compelled to provide these. If there are special hardships inherent in the industry, as in pottery, every known device for the protection of the girl should be installed. Twenty years ago certain diseases were so prevalent in this industry that they were made the subject of a special report to the State Board of Health. Improvements have been made since then, but even now rheumatism and diseases of the



## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

respiratory organs are all too prevalent. Girls are too valuable to society to be sacrificed for china.

In the second place, the women need higher wages to enable them to get a reasonable degree of comfort out of life. Many lack efficiency, it is true, but they should be given an opportunity to become more efficient in their special tasks. They need also a chance to gratify their desire for social intercourse. They must be helped in this by philanthropically disposed people.

Some employers are honestly endeavoring to improve conditions where they can. Considerable betterment work is conducted, and some of it seems to lack the objectionable paternalistic features so often accompanying undertakings of this kind. At least three of the silk-mills have employees' benefit societies designed to furnish funds to cover periods of sickness, while one has in addition to this a death benefit. The dues in all are low. For instance, ten cents a month will give the girl \$2.35 a week during illness, while thirty cents will yield a benefit of \$7. One silk factory is on a profit-sharing basis.

Several potteries maintain lunch rooms for their workers, and in one there is also a sick benefit and burial fund association, organized and maintained by the employees. A member to be entitled to benefits must show that the disability from which she suffers was not brought on by her own misconduct.

These undertakings, however, affect only a few. The great mass of workers still remains untouched by any special beneficent influence. The opportunity is a rare one for any group wise enough to meet it in a spirit of fairness, and yet with a determination to make working life more desirable and more profitable in every way for thousands of young women.



## CHAPTER VI

### WOMEN TOILERS IN THE MIDDLE WEST

It is the purpose here to show something of the conditions under which women work in several small cities in Iowa and Michigan, as these states were among those chosen to represent the section so long dominantly agricultural, but now developing important manufacturing interests. The census for 1900 gives Iowa 100,000 women in gainful occupations, and Michigan but 25,000 more. Eliminating women in the professions and in domestic service, we have left for industrial pursuits only about half of the total in both cases, not a great number, it is true, but relatively very important. It must be remembered that the entire population of the two states is less than the total number of women workers in the whole country.

The states with new industrial interests should profit by the experiences of older sections, and avoid certain unfortunate conditions that have proved disastrous to the workers and to society as a whole. Desirable as such enlightened action seems to be, it does not appear to make a very strong appeal to those who are engaged in establishing industrial undertakings. They are more intent upon building up business than upon the ethics underlying its development. This has been the history of industrial growth. Each state in turn has to correct its own maladjustments, as they become conspicuous, when a little foresight might have prevented them altogether. The two states under discussion in this chapter are no exception to this general rule, as will be seen from the story presented.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

In Iowa, we studied thirty establishments in three cities, employing in the neighborhood of 2500 women, and some description of the way these women work making clothes and buttons and beer will serve to show that industrial hardships are found in the new as well as in the older and more crowded cities.

Passing first to the clothing trade, we find all types of garment factories, from the one paying \$2 a week to beginners and exacting fines for tardiness, to the well-ordered place where the young girl may earn about \$4 to start with on the piece-work system. Women perform the same tasks that they do elsewhere in the same trade, the only point of interest here being the conditions under which they perform these somewhat monotonous tasks.

On the whole, the factories seem brighter and better ventilated than those in the great cities. As land is cheaper in the smaller towns, there is not the ever present economic necessity for crowding buildings so close as to exclude light and air from one another. Passenger elevators, however, are rarely found, and girls are obliged to walk up four and even five flights of stairs to their work. They often complain of this, particularly as they are obliged to go out at noon, since lunch rooms are rarely provided by employers. In the smaller cities, it is quite natural for employees to go home to lunch, as they do not ordinarily live far from their work. Separate toilets are usually provided for the sexes, but dressing rooms are found only occasionally. The absence of dressing rooms does not appear to work much hardship from the girls' point of view, although the custom of changing street clothes for work dress is general. Even in places where there are dressing rooms the girls prefer to hang their clothes on hooks near their machines, and change them in the factory, regardless

## WOMEN TOILERS IN THE WEST

of onlookers of both sexes. They do this, probably not so much because they are immodest, as because they are indifferent ; and where one or two hundred women are employed, it seems more convenient to them for each to keep her clothes apart from the rest, and near to herself. Pleasant retiring rooms, with individual lockers, would probably overcome the prejudice in favor of near-by hooks, and have a general refining influence.

The usual working day is nine hours, but there is considerable freedom allowed employees in regard to time in most factories, on account of the prevalence of the piece system of payment. The girl is paid for the amount of work she turns out. While the privilege of working at will is advantageous in not holding the workers to a definite number of hours, it has resulted in some rather serious local complications which are deplored by those who know the situation. The younger and more frivolous girls often cease work early in the afternoon to meet men, sometimes questionable characters, in the parks, and return home at the usual closing hour, so that their mothers think they have been at work. This leniency on the part of employers is undoubtedly accounted for by the fact that work is not urgent. A conspicuous grievance of women in eastern cities is that no such leniency is permitted, where, even when there is no work for the girl to do, she is often obliged to spend her time in the factory without remuneration, in case her services should be required. The freedom in regard to afternoon hours is, however, not extended to the morning, and several firms systematically dock employees a half-day's pay when they arrive later than half-past seven. These factories begin work at seven.

Western women seem to be paid somewhat better than their New York sisters, and they do not work under so

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

severe pressure. The deadening effects of high speed are not seen, and on the whole the girls look sturdy.

The next industry that attracts attention is button making, and in one town that is an important center the great majority of the working women are engaged in this industry. The factories are naturally in river towns, as the buttons are made from river shells. Many of the buildings are old, and provide only the poorest accommodations for the employees.

The work of the women consists in grinding buttons, sharpening drills, running the hand-machines for stamping patterns on buttons, and the automatic machines for centering and drilling and sorting. The grinders are usually young girls of fourteen or fifteen, and the grinding process consists in arranging buttons on a moving belt to be smoothed by machinery. The shell dust is thick at these machines and is most injurious to the respiratory organs.

The sorters sit at window tables and sort buttons. This, as well as other forms of work, is paid by the piece. Sorting is much more desirable than grinding, and, because of the difference, the sorters feel superior to those in the machine rooms, and draw a rather rigid social line.

The automatic machines for centering and drilling are provided with tubes through which the dust is carried to the factory chimney, but the grinding-machines have no such appliances, and the young women suffer injury. A little ingenuity could certainly overcome this difficulty.

The highest wages paid are satisfactory enough, but the lowest are inadequate. Some of the sorters earn from \$12 to \$14 a week, while other workers of experience make only \$6, and the unskilled girl fares much worse. The great majority have homes in the city, but girls from the country round about are frequently attracted by reports

## WOMEN TOILERS IN THE WEST

of the high wages, and come in to seek employment. They are often grievously disappointed when they find that they cannot earn over \$3 or \$4 at first. The result is that they either go home, or grow discouraged, and drift around looking for higher wages, and finally go into domestic service, as that provides at least a home over and above the wage.

The button workers are a considerable problem in the town, but the people, chiefly through religious organizations, are trying to meet their needs.

Women are entering the breweries in several western states, and they seem to be employed almost entirely as inspectors, bottle washers, labelers, and wrappers. In a river town in Iowa, we found about sixty working in one establishment, and the firm had been employing women for seven years.

The utilizing of women in this particular occupation seems to meet with severe condemnation in some quarters. It is feared that they will be unduly demoralized by familiarity with drink and inevitable contact with a low type of men. The industry, therefore, assumes a local importance out of proportion to its numerical rank. A few hundred women at most are found, but the tendency is toward an increase. Curiously enough, a certain closing law<sup>1</sup> resulted in an increased number of women in the breweries, owing to the greater consumption of bottled beer, and the consequent need of more women to get bottles ready for the market. One brewery, employing thirty-eight women in 1906, had sixty during the summer of 1907.

Here the women wear a blue uniform and look fairly neat. They work all day and nearly every evening in summer. Overtime is required on penalty of losing one's

<sup>1</sup> 1907.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

position. The regular day's work is from seven in the morning until noon, and from one until five. If the employees are needed until eight in the evening, they work until that hour without supper; if they are to work until ten, they stop from five to six. These long days carry with them no chance for vacation in the summer, as that is the busy season, but they are laid off in squads in the winter, for two weeks or a month each. This simply means a period of unemployment which is not welcomed. The women who inspect the beer and wash bottles stand all day. The work of inspecting is said to be injurious to the eyes, since the inspector has to use artificial light, owing to the location of inspecting rooms, and this light is often insufficient. Bottle washing offers steady employment, and those who engage in it can always count on work; but not so with the labelers. The men receive double time payment for overtime work because they belong to the union, while the girls, who are unorganized, and must remain so according to a company edict, get only the regular rate, which is  $6\frac{2}{3}$ ,  $8\frac{1}{3}$ , 11, or 12 cents an hour according to the sort of work. The highest wage received by the women is \$1.10 a day, except in the case of forewomen, who receive more. The usual wage, however, falls below this. Labelers receive 75 cents, and bottle washers \$1 a day. In the face of public disapproval of brewery work for girls, many mothers say that they consider it more desirable for their daughters than the overall factories with their laxity in regard to afternoon hours. The mother's interest in the daughter's work is noticeable in the towns in the Middle West, and it is a most encouraging feature, as many of the girls live at home, and so are influenced by the parents' attitude. The brewery girls are mainly from German families who

## WOMEN TOILERS IN THE WEST

are not concerned with the question of the demoralizing effect of contact with beer and beer drinkers in the brewing establishments.

In Michigan, thread and clothing occupied our attention, and in the towns selected there were altogether only about 2000 women in the two industries. It was noticeable that the demand for workers exceeded the local supply and employers advertised freely throughout the state for the needed help. Yet in spite of special inducements, it is difficult to secure an adequate number of workers. This scarcity of labor may account for the independence observed in many of the women. Yet this independence does not appear to result in perceptibly higher wages, save in a few instances.

The thread<sup>1</sup> workers were studied in so-called model factories, and the companies' claim to superiority in certain directions seems warranted. Working conditions are apparently as good as they can be, and there is a sincere effort to further the comfort and welfare of the workers. All the mills are lined with windows so that there is abundance of light; the aisles are broad and unobstructed; and, except in rooms where machinery requires great quantities of oil, everything is clean. The machines are well protected, and, as they are tended by machinists, the girls have no responsibility in regard to them. Bobbin boys carry the spools back and forth and do all the heavy work.

The only unfortunate conditions observed in the work-rooms were the long hours and the noise, which is deafening in the weaving room. There one feels the jar of the machines to a greater extent than in other departments. Many of the girls say that they become accus-

<sup>1</sup> Silk thread and silk fabrics.



## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

tomed to the noise in about two weeks, and it has no further effect on them, while others insist that it gradually undermines the nervous system and dulls the sense of hearing. There is no doubt that the strain of the long hours tends to increase the effect of the noise.

If the working day were shorter, and if the employees were not required to expend their energy up to the point of exhaustion, they would have more strength to withstand the nerve-racking noise. The whistles blow at a quarter past six in the morning, and the mills shut down in the evening at six. There is an hour allowed at noon, making the work day ten hours and forty-five minutes long, without overtime, which is occasionally required. The rules in regard to tardiness are strict. An employee who is late when her department is busy is likely to be locked out for half a day, and the time-workers are docked half an hour for every five minutes' tardiness. The mills close on Saturday afternoons throughout the year.

The spoolers may sit at their work, but all the other operators stand. When the silk "runs well," that is, when they are working on good silk, they can set the machines and sit down while a reel is being wound or a spool covered, but when the silk is poor they are on their feet constantly, untangling it, and tying it where it breaks.

It is much more difficult to work with a poor quality of silk than with good, and employees have to take their chances on whatever kind is given them. If the firm has bought a good grade, the labor of the workers is comparatively easy, and their wages consequently fairly high; if a poor grade is given to them, they are expected to work the same number of hours, although the fatigue is much greater and their piece rate is not raised. The

## WOMEN TOILERS IN THE WEST

girls say that when the silk is particularly bad, they grow so nervous that they often have hysterics. One woman testified that one day she had worked from eight o'clock to a quarter of eleven, and in the two hours and three-quarters had made only  $4\frac{1}{2}$  cents, and this because of the poor quality of silk furnished.

Some of the women have been working in the mills for twenty years. They are loyal to their employers, and seem to appreciate their many advantages, but when talking about wages they smile bitterly, and say that after so long a time they are able to earn at most only \$7.50 or \$8 a week. The lowest wage found was \$2.50 a week, paid in one instance to a girl of seventeen, and again to one of fifteen, both living in a corporation boarding-house at a cost of \$2 a week each; the highest was \$11.25, earned by a girl of seventeen, who paid the same sum as the others for board. Both cases are unusual. The majority report earnings between \$5.50 and \$7.50 a week, with fairly regular employment.

Many workers in these mills come from the surrounding farms and villages, and as it is difficult for them to find accommodation in town, one of the companies operates two boarding-houses for their convenience. One is a new building of pressed brick and terra-cotta — the finest residence in the town; the other is much older but home-like, equipped with the best modern plumbing and healthful and pleasant in every way. Both have beautiful lawns; the older one, especially, is shaded by large old trees and shrubs and has a fine flower garden. Each house contains two well-furnished parlors, and a small library and reading room. The bedrooms are not large, but large enough to be comfortable and pretty. Two girls occupy a room.

The two houses, with an annex, accommodate 200 girls

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

for from \$2 to \$2.40 a week. The residents have certain privileges which they value greatly, such as the free use of a well-equipped laundry; but there are also some restrictions which, on the whole, they view quite philosophically. A rigidly enforced house rule is that all girls must be in by half-past nine at night, unless granted a pass by the matron. But as there is a great dearth of evening amusements, this curtailment of liberty does not seem to work any special hardship. Were it not that the churches are unusually active, the place would be in a state of social starvation. Almost all the mill girls go to church and are helpful and enthusiastic in the varied church activities, but several said, "This is not enough." They long for diversion.

This mill population presents a picture of the industrial life of middle-class Americans in their struggle for self-realization. A few Canadians from across the border are about the only foreign-born workers. The rest are Americans, of German, Irish, and French descent. The girls, as has been said, are mainly from the farms and small towns in the central part of the state and many have a high school education. They would lend themselves readily to any effort to broaden their horizon, and thus present a very different problem from that of the New Jersey silk-workers, or the Massachusetts thread-mill operatives. But they grow restless, even defiant at times, over the ceaseless monotony of mechanical operations. These girls could work well in some organization of their own, which would furnish them instruction and recreation. This, added to the interest taken by employers, would counteract the more or less deadening influence of a small town, barren of moral and intellectual stimulus. It would mean new life for a thousand girls.

## WOMEN TOILERS IN THE WEST

The makers of various kinds of women's clothing, chiefly underwear, were interviewed in a town five or six times larger than the one where the silk thread is made. Here the working day for all factories is from 6.30 A. M. to 6.00 P. M., when a Saturday half-holiday is given; when it is not, shops close half an hour earlier. It has long been the proud boast that this is a "ten cents an hour" town, but at least one manufacturer admitted, that, with slack seasons and fluctuating piece rates, it has become in reality a "five dollars a week" town. As a matter of fact, the younger factory girls seldom earn more than \$4.50 a week.

The demand for workers in the clothing trade is greater than the town can supply, in spite of the manufacturers' assertion that almost all of the girls live at home and work only for spending money.

One is led to doubt the statement, however, not only because it does not seem plausible, but because there are advertisements in the papers in small towns all over the state calling for girls to come to the work awaiting them, and offering special inducements. There are no company boarding-houses, and although it seems as if every house in the town announced "furnished rooms" for rent, boarding is becoming a problem since the increased cost of living has raised the room rent, from fifty and seventy-five cents, to \$1 and \$2 a week. Many live in furnished rooms and do "light housekeeping," or live "out of a bag," as one woman expressed it, which means that they subsist chiefly on cheap and unnutritious bakery stuff. Those who board and room at the same place have always paid \$2 or \$2.50 a week, but the rates are being raised to \$3, \$3.50, and \$4 in most of the larger boarding-houses.

The town itself is attractive. Even the little cheap cot-

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

tages in the Polish quarter are new and neat, with well-kept grassy lawns. The general air of beauty and refinement has had its effect on the girls in the factories. Like the silk workers, they are nearly all Americans, born in the state in which they work. There are a few American-born Poles who speak English well, and bear no resemblance to the Polish girls working in the clothing shops of Chicago. The Polish immigrant women work in the bean elevators, and do not go into the factories. Here, as elsewhere in the state, one finds many Canadians, but of a very different type from their French-speaking sisters in the New England mills. They all have a grammar school education, and many have been through the high schools, so that they are on a par with the Americans with whom they work.

The clothing workers were not found in model factories; indeed, sanitary conditions were bad in several instances. But bad ventilation and bad odors seem to make little or no impression on the girls. Their attention is riveted on the strain of the work and the tendency to cut wage rates. They assert that, while the rates on the various processes are not actually reduced, a virtual reduction is brought about by the custom of dividing one piece of work between an experienced woman and a young girl, the latter being given all the easy "jobs," thus making the task harder for the older woman, and her wages lower. An example of this is furnished by a woman who, before the adoption of this custom, was able to earn from \$12 to \$14 a week, but now finds her highest rate \$9.

It is not unusual to find women performing tasks requiring great strength, as well as endurance. In one establishment where all the pressing is done by two women, thirteen-pound gas irons are in use, and the women press ten

## WOMEN TOILERS IN THE WEST

hours a day. One woman was partially paralyzed as a result of nervous strain and unduly hard labor ; the other, buoyant and strong, was helping her husband buy a home. The struggling, weary, paralyzed widow looks wonderingly at her sister worker's energy, and thinks that she would gladly live in a rented house, if only she had some one to take care of her.

The scarcity of female labor in this industry seems to give women workers unusual independence. There is always a demand for employees. It is said that because of this fact the girls know that their demands will be met, and they are not at all chary about making them. When the long corset was introduced, one girl demanded that her piece rate be raised from eight to ten cents per dozen for the longer seam. The foreman explained to her that while it required more work and more cloth, the garment would still be sold at the old price, and would be an actual loss to the firm if the cost of labor were increased. She replied that she was sorry for the firm, but that her rate would have to be raised if she remained. The rate was raised, although on this particular line of corsets there was no extra profit. Non-union girls in New York or Chicago are obliged to go on stitching the longer seam at the old rate because there are many others waiting to take their places.

The intelligent American women in the Middle West could, undoubtedly, equalize wages by a little coöperation. Employers are reasonable, and seem to take a great deal of interest in their employees, but their point of view in regard to wages is not that of the girls, nor is it always that of the community.

The average sum earned in the clothing shops is between \$6 and \$7 a week. There is not much slack time

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

during the year, and living expenses are low, so the girls are better off than city workers in the same industry.

There is considerable class feeling in the town, and the expression "only a factory girl" is frequently heard. Some of the girls are sensitive and shrink from the social ostracism, while others appear to find it quite diverting that their old schoolmates in more favorable circumstances should pass them by as strangers.

The small industrial communities in states largely rural offer certain advantages to the worker in the way of decreased cost of living and less crowded quarters, but at the same time there is too often a social dreariness that offsets the charm of fresh air and grass and trees. The girl has not the chance for self-improvement that the city employee has. This need could easily be met by local societies or the extension of national organizations. The homogeneity of many of the industrial groups in the Middle West would make the task simple enough. In Iowa, 249 out of 452 women interviewed were making use of opportunities to study, including the use of libraries. In Michigan the proportion was 103 out of 194. This is a pleasing indication. Recreational facilities are sadly lacking in most of the smaller towns, and young women need relaxation and enjoyment to counteract the numbing effects of high speed and long hours. They should have more of the delights of youth which economic independence is in a fair way to wrest from them.

This is the time to direct the course of industrial life in sections emerging from agriculturalism. The unfortunate developments in older centers should be avoided, for girls who work at spindle and loom and stitching-machine must be saved to the state.



## CHAPTER VII

### HOP PICKING IN OREGON<sup>1</sup>

DURING the last five years, hop picking has furnished a considerable field of employment to women throughout the early autumn in the Pacific Slope states. Formerly, the picking was done largely by the family and neighbors, and these, in turn, as the industry developed, were assisted, or superseded, by Indians and the Chinese. This was in the day of comparatively small fields. But a change was inevitable when the acres under cultivation were multiplied, and miles of trellises indicated the extent of the crops to be harvested. Thousands of workers are needed where hundreds sufficed several years ago.

The suddenness with which unattached young women appeared in the big fields as pickers thrust upon earnest people an entirely new problem, — a problem of sufficient local importance to warrant the most careful study of at least a typical large field, and several small ones, in the section ranking first in output.

Of the hop-raising states, Oregon is the most important, producing in 1907 about 25,000,000 pounds to be compared with 18,000,000 for California, 10,000,000 for New York and 8,000,000 for Washington. Before 1850, almost all the hops produced in the United States were raised in New England. During the next forty years, New York produced more than all the other states combined. Now the palm goes to the Pacific coast country, which has to-day 40,000 acres under hops. A generation ago it had

<sup>1</sup> This chapter appeared, in slightly different form, in the *American Journal of Sociology*, July, 1909.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

fewer than 2000. Scarcity of labor, prohibitionist agitation, and worn-out soil combined to render hop growing in New York unprofitable. The unfertilized soil of Oregon will yield twice as many pounds to the acre as the New York earth can, aided by much fertilization.

Owing to the fact that no studies of hop-pickers had been made previously to our undertaking, and the impossibility of getting information through ordinary channels, it seemed necessary to depart from the usual methods of inquiry adopted by investigators, and resort to the way traveled occasionally by journalists in their quest for a story. But it must be remembered that Paul Göhre<sup>1</sup> and Frau Dr. Minna Wettstein-Adelt<sup>2</sup> in Germany and Professor Walter Wyckoff<sup>3</sup> in our own country indorsed the value of the hardships of self-imposed toil, for longer or shorter periods, in order to learn more about the workers than could otherwise be learned. The length of time required to discover the facts sought must depend upon the nature of the labor. Where freedom and intimacy prevail, as they do among the hop-pickers, one can learn more in a few days than in as many weeks in an industry characterized by minute division of labor, and a high degree of managerial organization.

Having in mind the situation that has been suggested, I<sup>4</sup> decided to go myself to the Far West and join in the life and labor of the pickers.

<sup>1</sup> "Three Months in a Workshop," 1895.

<sup>2</sup> "3½ Monate Fabrik-Arbeiterin," 1897.

<sup>3</sup> "The Workers," 1898.

<sup>4</sup> As evidence of seriousness of purpose and experience in enduring toil, the reader is referred to my earlier first-hand studies of working women as follows:

"Two Weeks in Department Stores," *American Journal of Sociology*, May, 1899, and "The Sweatshop in Summer," *American Journal of Sociology*, November, 1903.

## HOP PICKING IN OREGON

I arrived in Portland a few days before the opening of the season, which is about the first of September, and began to look for work. I eagerly scanned the advertising columns of the daily papers to see if more pickers were needed. My quest was soon rewarded, for I found numerous advertisements calling for help in the fields, as, for example :

WANTED — 1000 hop-pickers to pick 624 acres of hops; big crop; largest and best equipped hop yard in Oregon; all on trellis wire; perfect accommodations; grocery store, bakery, butcher shop, barber shop, dancing pavilion 50×150 feet, telephone, physician, beautiful camping ground, 3-acre bathing pool, restaurant, provisions sold at Portland prices. We pay \$1.10 per 100 pounds; reduced excursion rates on our special train. For particulars apply to —.

HOP-PICKERS wanted — We pay 50 cents per box, camp shacks free; will be at the — Hotel, August 25 till September 3, to sell round-trip tickets to — Oregon. —, grower.

WANTED — Hop-pickers for my yard at — Ore.; pay 50 cents per box; will be at — Hotel, August 25 till September 1.

HOP-PICKERS — Good camp ground, store, plenty wood, pay 50 cents per box; 55 acres. Inquire —.

A rather unusual kind was the following, which appeared in several country newspapers :

WANTED — 1000 pickers for — Hop Field, —. We pay \$1.10 per 100 pounds. Perfect accommodations, good food at city prices, free whiskey, dance five nights in the week, evangelists on Sunday, and a h—— of a time.

This proved most alluring and showed the cosmopolitanism of the yard. All tastes were considered. It, of course, captured me, as it did many another! I presented myself at the Portland office of what is said to

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

be the largest hop field in the world and asked for employment. I was engaged on the spot, and agreed to start the next morning at eight on a special train known as the "Hop Special." With a parting warning to be on time, the man in charge handed me my round-trip ticket, for which I paid \$2.60, which was a little more than one fare.

I was at the Union Station the following morning by half-past seven and found a motley assortment of people — my companions-to-be — all waiting for the "Special." There were men and women and children, scores and scores of them belonging to family groups, and in addition, several hundred young men and women off for a lark with a chance to make some money. Many of the families were from the country, one woman having come a distance of 200 miles with seven children ranging in age from two to fifteen years. The other class, the unattached men and women, was mainly the city's floating, working population.

It was a picturesque gathering, with an air of expectancy about it. There was to be at least a change of occupation. The weary mother from the farm would have the less onerous camp life, and an opportunity to make some money in the field; the clerks and factory workers and servant girls were looking forward to freedom and a chance to form new social ties. It was a funny-looking crowd as to clothes, — from the somber, old-fashioned, misshapen garments of the country people, to the rather loud trappings of the city girls. With these, there was a decided effort to be "smart," and gay-colored sweaters, outing hats, and floating veils were much in evidence. And everybody was chewing gum!

After much delay, and picture-taking, and swearing, we

## HOP PICKING IN OREGON

were loaded on the train, — 800 of us in twelve cars, — and started for the field, eighty-one miles away. The journey was a memorable one, to me at least. It was pandemonium let loose ; men and boys smoked pipes and cigarettes, and drank whisky from bottles they carried with them ; old men passed flasks to young boys, with voices still shrill, and they eagerly quaffed ; children laughed and cried in turn according as they got what they wanted or the reverse, while young men and maidens were growing intimate at an astonishingly rapid rate ; and, adding to the din, were the venders of “cracker-jack” and ham sandwiches. It all had a weird fascination for me as I traveled about from car to car ostensibly looking for friends.

At every stop, and the stops were many through that farming country with its single track, young men fairly hurled themselves out of the cars and into the near-by orchards and gathered with a free hand apples and prunes, in spite of protests from the owners. These trophies they bore back to the train, bushels of them, and shared with the girls. Such generosity made for good fellowship, and by the time we reached Independence, the destination of our train, couples were pillowing their heads against each other. But all this was rudely interfered with when the train stopped. We had been four hours making the journey and the end was not yet.

The next step was to transfer us to great, springless hay-racks, or wagons, thirty or forty to each one, ranged along the sides and end, with feet hanging down, while luggage was piled up in the middle. The order went forth that men must walk, while women and children would ride. This was met with groans and shouts of disapproval, but all was finally amicably settled, and the

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

long, grotesque procession started on its six-mile journey over the dusty country road. It did end at last, although I had my doubts at times if it ever would. But we were all living and able to hobble at half-past four in the afternoon, when we arrived at a dusty hillside at the edge of a wood near the hop field.

I had had nothing to eat since half-past six in the morning, so with the others I made a raid on the eating-house without delay. Then I followed the rest to arrange for my accommodation. I engaged a bed in a tent at a cost of \$1 for two<sup>1</sup> for the season. I was given several yards of denim and told to make a tick, then go to a barn and fill it with fresh straw, which had been brought there for this purpose. This straw tick was put on the ground in one corner of a tent to be occupied by ten women.

When darkness came, we were a weary lot, and the rain was coming down, but there was a dance scheduled in the big hall and so we must forget our weariness and go. Two girls in my tent—a factory worker and a waitress—were putting on much finery for the event and asked me to go with them so I would get acquainted. I demurred a little on account of my blue calico wrapper and checked apron,<sup>2</sup> but they said, “Don’t you mind; you’ll earn some money in the hops, and can buy you some new clothes.” Thus was I accepted, and I felt that here at least was true democracy. Sad to relate, the dance had to be postponed, for it was found that the musical instruments had not arrived. But I shall never forget that Laura and “Kid” were willing to take me and introduce me to their friends.

<sup>1</sup> I had a companion with me, a young woman from the University of Oregon, whom I had engaged as an assistant.

<sup>2</sup> The usual uniform of the “yard” and my only outfit.

## HOP PICKING IN OREGON

It was midnight before the campers were finally settled, and some of them had to sleep out in the rain because they could not find their belongings. It should be explained that the majority took their own simple equipment, and so were saved the expense that I incurred. Pillowless straw beds are not conducive to sleep, especially with the rain coming in as it did in my corner. I opened an umbrella, and finally slept, only to dream of icebergs. The cold of those Oregon nights makes me shudder yet. The others were used to the climate, and so were more comfortable than I.

Sunday was a busy day with us. We had to finish getting settled in the morning, and this gave an excellent opportunity to become acquainted. The process of making friends was very simple in the unconventional atmosphere of camp life, and by noon we were talking freely about the money we hoped to make in the yards<sup>1</sup> in the next few days or weeks. We talked less readily about our past. The usual question, "Have you ever picked before?" was put to me, and, after my negative reply, some further facts seemed to be expected, so I volunteered the information that I had been doing various things, which was accepted for what it was worth, and the matter allowed to drop, for, as one woman in our tent said, with a knowing nod, "We's all done things we doesn't care to tell about." Again the democracy of the hop field triumphed, and each stranger was taken on her merits, regardless of previous condition of servitude.

In the afternoon, the real business of the season began, — the registration of pickers, and their assignment to

<sup>1</sup> It may be explained here that technically the entire acreage is called a "field," while the subdivisions for the purpose of work are known as "yards." The words are often used interchangeably, however.



## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

yards and companies. That was an experience upon which I look back with horror. The boss seated himself in a narrow doorway and ordered the crowd to get in line. There were in all about a thousand people on the grounds, including those who had come in from the surrounding country, so the line soon became a sweating, swearing mob. Men crowded girls almost to suffocation, and then, repulsed, replied with insulting speech. I was within a short distance of the door when registration opened. In half an hour, I was fully twenty feet away, with a great wall of human beings in front of me. This, plainly, was no time for politeness; the fight for first place there would put a bargain-counter crush to shame, and make a football hero look to his laurels. The race was not to the strong, but to the canny. Gay girls soon began to pay toll in kisses or promises and were shoved up ahead. I was beaten about for over two hours, and I saw women grow dizzy and faint and drop out. I became so interested in the spectacle that I lost sight of the objective point, and, that I procured a number before dark, was due to the dogged persistence of one of my new friends, who handed in my name and obtained for me the coveted ribbon badge stating that my number was 185 in yard B, Company 4. There was a different color for each yard. Mine was pink, and I pinned it on with pride. Ordinary foresight would have prevented the horrors of that afternoon. It would have been so easy to have two registration booths, one for the men and the other for the women.

The next important event of the day was the evening service in the big dance hall conducted by the promised evangelist. Practically everybody on the ground turned out to the stereopticon lecture on the "Parables of

## HOP PICKING IN OREGON

Jesus." As many said at the door, "We'll sample it." The music seemed to meet with approval, but when the minister commenced offering a stereotyped prayer he was greeted with "Cut it out," and "To the timber." He did neither, and then followed a stampede for the door by fully two-thirds of the men present. The rest of the audience engaged in conversation. The crowd sauntered in to hear the next piece of music, but when the sermon began, it grew restive and soon voiced its disapproval in no uncertain terms. I was back near the door and could see that the speaker was laboring under great difficulties. The hall was very large, and the acoustic properties as bad as they could possibly be, and his lantern was sputtering. But worse than all this was his inability to "get next" to the situation, to use the pickers' phrase. The parables of Jesus should prove interesting to every one; but that crowd objected to the lingo of the pulpit. And then they could not see the whole "show," for the speaker was in front of the canvas. People in my neighborhood swore and laughed and yelled, but to no avail. When I suggested that some of us tell the minister to move, a heated discussion followed which ended in a challenge to me. They were of one accord that I "dassent do it." This acted as a spur, and she of the blue calico wrapper and checked apron called out, "Get over to one side, please." The speaker fairly leaped over, from the suddenness of the request, and the daring one was congratulated in such terms as these: "Gee, you're smarter than you look," "You kin have me for the askin'," "I'll weigh your hops heavy to-morrow;" this and more from the men; from the women around me, one and all, "Weren't you scared?" in awestruck tones, and I said truly, "Yes."

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

It was a hard audience for any speaker to satisfy, but there was a remarkable opportunity for a man of power who could forget that he was a clergyman and only remember that he was a human being with a message to other human beings. Well-fed and well-dressed citizens, I notice, hear without outward sign of distress the platitudes that too often go with clerical clothes, but not so the brothers and sisters of the wage-earning class. They know a good story when they hear it, and they know a good "show" when they see it, and they hate to be "done."

We could not sleep much that night, for men were drinking and carousing until nearly morning, and at four, the first eager pickers were astir, for the real work was to begin on Monday in spite of the fact that it was Labor Day. There was so much preliminary arranging to be done that it was nine o'clock before we were finally started for our yards. But the mere picking was not of so much importance to me. I wanted to learn about the living conditions so far as young women were concerned, and I was learning of those all the time. It was a delight, however, to see the various companies form and march off to victory, for every one expected to make a lot of money, — from \$3 to \$7 a day I was told, when I engaged work in Portland.

A hop field is a beautiful sight with its harvest of blossoms hanging in enticing clusters on the wire trellises from twelve to fifteen feet in height. When we reached our division, we were instructed to take partners, as we were to pick two to a vine ; and to provide ourselves with baskets, enormous affairs, designed to hold twenty-five pounds — and hops are very light ; and a canvas bag in which to empty the baskets when full. Thus equipped, I was

## HOP PICKING IN OREGON

initiated into the mysteries of picking. One said, "Strip the vines, leaves and all." Another said, "Throw in sand, it weighs good." But the voice of the yard, master came loud and clear, "Pick clean, or you get no money."

Picking hops is fascinating, and there is a tradition in Oregon that it is a most healthful occupation, but it is hard, with the reaching, and stooping, and tramping over the rough plowed ground. Then the air is thick with pollen which is supposed to be health-giving, but it choked me, and by dinner-time I could hardly speak. But I had picked fifty-three pounds, according to the weigher, and got a coupon entitling me to fifty-six cents in cash. I worked about two hours and a half, because I had to stop at half-past eleven to go up to the restaurant to wait on tables. They were short of help and offered free meals to girls who would serve an hour. As the cost of the meal was only twenty cents, the job was not in great demand: they could earn more in the field, they thought. The woman in charge of the dining room had me marked from the first and kept asking me to help. Finally I yielded, and so I had to leave the field before the others to get my own dinner. I was paid in advance; I would not work on any other basis; I took no chances on getting a meal after the hungry horde was fed. The twenty-cent meal was the best for the price that I have ever seen, but, in order to show its superior judgment in such matters, the crowd complained over the lack of pie. They told me to "get a move on" or they would have me "fired." At one o'clock, I sat down with a girl to gloat over the seventy-six cents I had earned since breakfast, and to wonder how long one could endure such weariness, when the manager of the dining room came along and ordered me to the

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

kitchen to wash dishes. At that I struck, and so did the girl with me, and we loftily "walked out." But we established the principle that contracts with the girls must be regarded, if meals were to be served.

There was murmuring that day among the pickers because they could not make "good" money; few, if any, earned over \$2. Clean picking was regarded as a great hardship. Our meals and bed cost about seventy-five cents a day, and some girls did not make enough to meet that expense. There was much dissatisfaction, too, over the fact that the weighers frequently gave the young, and pretty, and flirtatious girls ten or twelve pounds extra weight. There were many opportunities in the field for little courtesies of the kind, and the young, attractive girl needed much wisdom not to become entangled by them. The chivalrous swain could always make excuses to pick in the admired one's basket while his own was standing empty. The wire-men<sup>1</sup> and the weighers were the aristocrats of the company. They were paid by the day and went about in leisurely fashion. As they came in contact with all the girls in their divisions, they had ample opportunity to exercise their wiles.

The field, filled with pickers, was an interesting sight. In one row a man and his wife picked together while small children crawled around in the dirt at their feet; over a little was a woman with six offspring picking in her basket; just beyond was a giddy girl with a forward boy she met on the train, — both picking fast and passing cheap compliments; away to the right was a red-cheeked German girl crying already because her clumsy fingers made work slow; near her were two bright-looking

<sup>1</sup> Men who let down the wires holding the vines. When we wanted this done, we called out "Wire down," and finally the man would appear.

## HOP PICKING IN OREGON

high school girls eager to earn money for clothes ; not far away was a widow of nearly fifty with her aged mother, making small headway with the hops ; I taught them what I had learned, and then things went better.

It was a weary, discouraged crowd that left the yards the first night. We were all tired, and we had not made as much money as we had hoped. So we sat around and talked in the early evening, and later we gathered in the big tent and had an impromptu concert, which cheered us all. This tent is deserving of more than passing mention inasmuch as it represented the crystallization of a desire to improve social conditions in the field. The very progressive body of women comprising the Oregon Young Women's Christian Association desired to do what was possible to render hop picking in a big public field more respectable than it is usually considered, and for the reason that hundreds of young women in the state need to avail themselves of its earnings, but are sometimes in moral peril while so doing.

These women persuaded the owner of the field to allow them to conduct the restaurant on the grounds and maintain a social center. This appealed to him as a good business proposition, and he readily acceded to it. Thus it came about that a beneficent influence was introduced into the field and received the hearty indorsement of all concerned.

The women were beset with difficulties from the beginning, but one by one they were overcome, owing chiefly to the skillful management of the one<sup>1</sup> in charge

<sup>1</sup> Miss Frances Gage, State Secretary of Oregon and Washington.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

of the work. Quite as interesting to me as the picking itself was the opportunity to study this experiment in leavening the crowd. One Sunday I saw a woman on the kitchen steps stoning prunes to lessen the burden of the cooks. I went up and offered to help her. She instructed me in the art, and while the work progressed, entertained me with stories of Turkey, a country she knew well. A day or two later she settled a strike in the kitchen, and still later in the season, when the cooks failed to live up to their agreement, she discharged the whole force of men, telephoned to Portland for more help, and took charge of the culinary department till relief came. And the pickers got their meals on time, and never knew that anything had happened !

This woman, who stoned prunes, settled strikes, and acted as cook, opened up the big tent at night, and in an amazingly short time mustered the "talent" of the field about her and gave "concerts" that made everybody happy. Undoubtedly, such an influence in the field was good, and it seems desirable that this work should continue and be extended to all the large<sup>1</sup> fields where young women go and are constantly menaced by moral dangers offset by no restraining influence. The "Association ladies" became quite popular with the girls, and it was interesting to notice how quickly some of them recognized the possibilities of "stylishness" in such chaperonage !

The second day of picking began at half-past four in the dim light and the dew. I was weary beyond expression, for I had been helping in various ways until late the

<sup>1</sup> There are in addition many "family yards" employing "neighbors," which do not present the problems of the large field with its varied assortment of pickers.



## HOP PICKING IN OREGON

night before. Many of my friends were tired, too, so the picking went slowly in the morning. But gossip was rife, for we were getting pretty well acquainted, and we already knew that the red-cheeked, clumsy-fingered German girl, who wept as she picked the day before, had run away from her husband and baby, and was not reveling in her first taste of economic independence. This and much more was talked about while the full clusters were stripped into the baskets. If gossip had been a marketable commodity, there would have been no cause for complaint over small earnings that morning.

At noon, I told my companions that I had made up my mind to go back to Portland that day, and they immediately supposed it was because I was not making money enough. They urged me to stay, saying the picking would be better later. When they found coaxing of no avail, they showed their friendliness by anxiously asking if I had enough money to take me home. And so I went away, weary of body, to keep an appointment very different in character two hundred miles from there, my identity unsuspected. Pickers were coming and going all the time, so my departure created no special comment. Several left when I did, saying that life was too dull, and others wanted to try their fortunes elsewhere. They were a roving lot, often looking for adventure.

The following table contains some facts learned from my companions, and is presented here, strange mixture though it is, to illustrate the various types of women who answer the call of the hop field. Later comparisons served to verify its representative character.

# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

NAME	NATION- ALITY	AGE	HOME	PERMANENT OCCUPATION	REASON FOR COMING
N. J.	American	17	Portland	Student	Health
M. D.	American	38	Antelope	Nurse	Profitable vacation
L. T.	American	22	Portland	Garment maker	Good time
A. H.	American	20	N. Lewis River, Wash.	Waitress	Good time
E. S.	German	17	Portland	Student	To make money
J. J.	American	15	Portland	Student	Health
M. G.	German	50	Salem	Farmer's wife	Outing for family
E. M.	German	15	Portland	Student	To earn money for clothes
K. L.	American	26	Portland	Laundress	To make all she could by whatever means
M. J.	American	50	Portland	Nurse	Health and rest
G. W.	German	17	Portland	Waitress	To make money
M. B.	American	25	Portland	Waitress	Change
M. S.	Swede	45	Astoria	Housewife	"Just took a notion to come"
N. J.	American	17	Portland	Shop-girl	To have good time
N. C.	American	17	Portland	Shop-girl	To have good time
M. B.	German	20	Portland	Housewife	Ran away from home
A. I.	American	18	Portland	Shop-girl	To have a change
J. L.	American	19	Portland	Factory girl	To make money
L. K.	German	22	Portland	Factory girl	To have outing
K. M.	German	21	Portland	Cook	To meet nice men
A. A.	American	16	Portland	Student	To earn money
J. G.	Swede	21	Portland	Housewife	To have a change
O. L.	American	15	Portland	Student	To earn money for clothes
J. L.	American	40	Astoria	Housewife	To earn money for chil- dren
M. M.	American	32	Astoria	Housewife	To earn money for chil- dren
G. H.	American	25	Portland	Factory girl	To have outing
J. G.	German	26	Portland	Shop-girl	To have outing

I carried away from the hop field a very real interest in all that pertains to the welfare of Oregon pickers. Unquestionably, certain improvements could be made in the organization of the army of workers and in the policing<sup>1</sup> of the grounds. Employers should be urged to make these changes, and to do all in their power to banish lawlessness. It is true they meet with some difficulties unknown to other employers, owing to the character of the industry. They are obliged to take the class of people they can get, perhaps to a greater extent than others, and many of these are likely to be thriftless, or of more or less vicious habits, and thus difficult to control. This

<sup>1</sup> One sheriff was there to keep that riotous throng in order.

## HOP PICKING IN OREGON

is particularly true of the young men, who, in turn, exercise a very decided influence over the young women.

Changes might be made also in the pastimes of the crowd. Their desire for amusement after a monotonous day in the field is legitimate, and should be gratified, and the experiment of the Young Women's Christian Association would seem to indicate that wholesome entertainments would be appreciated by the majority. It would be unreasonable to expect such a company to settle down to quiet at dark satisfied with only the work. Human beings are not so constituted, for frequently the longest days of monotonous toil seem to demand nights of exciting pleasure. The factory girl in the city will dance till daylight after a hard day's work, and feel that only with such relaxation is life worth living. How much more, then, will such people as gather in a hop yard, with the spirit of an outing upon them, need to be amused. If nothing better be provided, the saloon and the dance hall will satisfy the craving.

The chief needs of the hop fields, then, as I observed them, are better organization and more wholesome recreation. The one could be cared for by the owner, the other by some outside group interested in social welfare, and I earnestly hope that both these needs will be met in the near future.

As the hop season returns, I shall want to journey out to Oregon to don the calico frock and apron, with the picker's stout gloves and neckerchief; and sleep again on the bed of straw; and rise in the dawn to help harvest the blossoms; and even to endure again the cruel weariness it implies, to enjoy the true democracy of the motley crowd and to watch the future realization of betterment efforts.

Long live the Oregon Hop-pickers!

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FRUIT INDUSTRIES IN CALIFORNIA

THE various processes connected with preparing fruit for the market afford occupation during a portion of the year to a great many women living in or near the fruit centers of California. But as some phases of this work, like hop picking, call for the segregation of workers in somewhat isolated places, there are serious problems, other than economic ones, forcing themselves upon the consideration of local agencies trying to meet the needs of young women wage-earners. It is admittedly easier to carry on activities for the more or less permanent body of city workers employed in the various manufacturing communities than to supply the social needs of seasonal workers, the very nature of whose work draws them out of their natural group setting. But this very fact reveals the opportunity for those who honestly desire to improve industrial environment. The business manager can always arrange to transport people and equipment to remote points in order to carry on his enterprise, and the powers that prey upon men always find it profitable, in spite of inconvenience, to follow in the wake of working groups.

The centers chosen for the study of the conditions of life and the earnings of women working in the fruit industries were Fresno and San José, representing as they do the great fruit-bearing areas of the state of California.

In many of the vineyards of the country surrounding

## FRUIT INDUSTRIES IN CALIFORNIA

Fresno are wineries and packing-houses where fruits are prepared for the market. But the crops are often sold unharvested and may then be sent to different points to be packed. In and near Fresno, are between twenty and twenty-five houses to which such fruit is shipped. Of these, only two are canneries; the others deal in raisins and dried fruits.

A conservative estimate of the number of women working in these places at the height of the season as given by the owner of the largest packing-house, who has been in the business fifteen years, is 1500, including Armenians, Russians, Germans, Mexicans, Italians, and Americans. Some 600 of these worked in the canneries before the dried fruit season opened. Of the whole number, about 70 per cent are foreign, 65 per cent married, 35 per cent young girls, and about 25 per cent of these, Americans.

San José is the center of a great prune country, producing one-half of the entire prune crop of the United States. During the busy season, when the fruit is being put on the market, hundreds of women are needed. Their work consists chiefly in "facing" the different sized boxes with the various grades of prunes. In order to do this, the fruit is put into scalding water for a few minutes to soften. Before it has cooled each prune is flattened out as large as possible by means of a peculiar rolling motion, then laid evenly on a fancy paper lining, sometimes in double rows with a "fencing" around, and sometimes in single rows. The price paid for this work is three or four cents a box. The heat and constant pressure often cause blisters and calloused thumbs, women having to discontinue work on this account.

In some of the houses, stools and benches are furnished, and may be used when desired, but many prefer to stand,

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

feeling they can accomplish more. A wage of \$2 represents a hard day's toil for even the oldest hand. It is no wonder the packers have trouble in securing enough help in the rush season, for in addition to the hard labor extra hands are taken on and dropped out at the pleasure of the firm.

Besides the dried-fruit houses, there are three or four canneries in San José. Here, hundreds of women find occupation for three, four, or five months. Their work is mostly peeling and putting the fruit in cans, although woman's part here is becoming less each year, as peeling- and canning-machines are now being used by some firms, and there is also an invention for labeling the cans, both of which mechanical devices do the work of women.

The canneries open in June, with cherries in San José, but not much before the beginning of August in Fresno. In the latter place they close in September. The dried-fruit packing then begins and lasts steadily through November in all the houses, and even into January in those that make a specialty of raisins. The canneries in San José are in operation much longer, for there tomatoes are put up, and the work continues until the end of October. Even after the dried fruit as a whole is finished there are short orders throughout the winter, so that it is sometimes possible for one to secure employment most of the year. On the face of it, it seems as if there were work in some form of fruit all the year. The packers frequently make this statement, but probably not more than two per cent of all the women working in the summer could get employment after the rush season is over.

The first thing one hears on mentioning fruit is the possibility of making large sums in the canneries and drying-houses. Every one tells about some one else who

## FRUIT INDUSTRIES IN CALIFORNIA

makes \$4 or \$5 a day, but it was not possible to find any such fortunate individuals. There are, however, a few workers of many years' standing who have acquired great speed in a special line, and these, under exceptional conditions, that is, when the fruit is of just the right quality, are able to make from \$3 to \$4 a day while these conditions last.

Wages depend on the kind of fruit and the rate at which it comes in. Very few were found who could make more than \$1.75 a day at canning tomatoes, while these same women said they always made \$3 at peaches. It matters not what the work is, nor how different it appears to an outsider, the whole system of payment seems to be regulated so that the workers get about the same amount. If one factory pays a little more a box, other things are so arranged as to make it, in the end, the same as in the place paying a lower rate. Making a rough estimate, it seems safe to say that, for an experienced employee, who is strong enough to work steadily and who has the average speed, the wage at the end of the season would be about \$2 a day.

The work in fruit is almost entirely piece-work, and although the average daily wage may be about the same for the different processes, there is considerable diversity in the plan of payment and the labor involved. "Facing" prunes brings three cents a box, making possible a daily wage from 75 cents to \$3 according to the speed of the worker. In filling cartons, the method is for seven girls to work at a table, and when each one has filled a box of forty-eight prunes, the table is credited with fourteen cents. The division of funds is made later. Much of this work is agreeable.

Labor in the canneries is likely to be hard and un-



## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

pleasant. In many places women are not allowed to sit, and the heat and steam from boiling fruit contribute to make the workrooms extremely uncomfortable. The floor is often covered with a thick layer of slime, and although the women work on slightly raised platforms, they nearly all find it necessary to wear overshoes. In addition to this discomfort, their fingers blister from contact with hot fruit.

The rate paid for preparing tomatoes<sup>1</sup> is usually two and a half cents a pan. If a woman remains a whole season she is paid a bonus at the end, which makes the rate equal to three cents a pan. This, of course, is an inducement to the worker to remain in the same establishment. Filling brings 20 cents for 225 closely packed cans, and 12½ cents for 250 not so well filled. A swift worker may earn from \$2 to \$3 at either of these processes. Rates vary somewhat with different kinds of fruits; for instance, filling cans with peaches brings 11½ cents an hour, some companies giving a bonus of 10 per cent if the worker remains the season, while pitters receive 14 cents an hour. The rate for cutting open and peeling peaches is 20 cents a box of from 70 to 75 pounds. More money can be made with peaches than with pears, because the latter are harder to peel.

The rate for packing fresh grapes is four cents a crate of 33 pounds, with a maximum wage of \$3 a day. Sixteen girls can pack 960 crates or one carload of grapes in a day. Overtime is paid for in one vineyard at the rate of 55 cents for two hours at night and \$2.65 for work on Sunday.

Fig packing employs a good many women. The figs are left on the trees to dry, and are washed, sorted, and

<sup>1</sup> Included with fruit, as they are canned in the same establishments.

## FRUIT INDUSTRIES IN CALIFORNIA

steamed in the packing-houses. One can learn to pack in a day, and the usual wage is one cent for packing a pound and a half brick, or  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents for a box of four pounds. The daily wage varies from \$1 to \$4. The fig season is a long one, as there are many tons of the dried fruit which must be packed in bricks and boxes. The lye used in the curing process is most injurious to the hands, and women often work with fingers wrapped in rags. One woman was found whose entire hand was sore and done up in a cloth, while she toiled away thus crippled.

Vineyard work entails difficulties in regard to living arrangements similar to those of the hop fields, since it is usually necessary to assemble the workers in rural colonies. In one vineyard, the campers had to pitch their tents near a foul pig-pen. There was no drainage, and no attention whatever was paid to refuse, and, as a result, several died of typhoid fever before the season closed.

An occupation of this character naturally does not attract the most efficient workers but rather those girls who must earn their spending money, and married women struggling to help pay for their homes and to secure additional comforts for their families. The fruit industry offers work to a class of women, the housekeepers, who cannot find other ways of earning so much. More and more the thrifty, hardy, foreign element is drifting into the industry and crowding back the weaker American sister. The Italians who work are practically all married and from forty to fifty years of age. These, and other foreigners, fill the canneries, and children old enough to be of service work with their mothers. One little girl of ten said that in vacation she made \$1 a day working from six in the morning till eight at night. She looked

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

well cared for and healthy, and insisted that she enjoyed the work. The married women do not spend their earnings in improving their own present condition, but seem inspired with a desire to save for their old age. They are indefatigable in their labor and look upon the opportunity of thus adding to their incomes as a special gift of Providence.

The Armenians are a totally different type and have come to California within the last ten years. They were of the farming class in their own country, and, seemingly, their one ambition is to own land. The girls work steadily in the fruit, and the mothers occasionally, as they can spare time from home. Almost without exception, they own or rent good cottages, which are comfortably furnished and have pianos, telephones, and various modern improvements. The colony maintains a free school for the purpose of teaching the Armenian language and customs to children born in America. It is very noticeable, that whereas children of other extraction invariably speak English among themselves, one can walk for blocks in the Armenian quarter of Fresno and hear the children speaking only Armenian.

It is difficult to discover what proportion of their wages the Armenian girls have for themselves. They probably turn a large part over to the family, but certainly retain enough to dress very well. The colony has several churches, and a good deal of social life, emanating from these. There was an attempt in Fresno to arrange for special clubs and classes among these girls, but it was not a great success. They are apparently more interested in cleanliness than in literature, for they have a number of bath-houses in constant use. These are open to the public Saturdays and Sundays.

## FRUIT INDUSTRIES IN CALIFORNIA

The Russians, on the other hand, are in need of some one to teach them the ordinary laws of hygiene. They are untidy and dirty, and many babies have serious eye trouble. These people have been coming to the West in great numbers within the last few years. They claim to be of German descent, having been in Russia only two generations, and among themselves speak only German. They belong to the Lutheran church. It is said by those who are in a position to know that the men are often heavy drinkers and abuse their wives, deserting them, or ceasing work as soon as the fruit season opens.

The Russians are the only white people who will pick grapes, the other pickers being Japanese, Chinese, and Indians. Whole families of Russians travel from vineyard to vineyard doing this most laborious work. The children are thus kept out of school. It is a common thing for a woman to be working in a packing-house, two or three older girls with her, her husband, if at work, in another department of the same house, and half a dozen younger children scrambling about in the tents outside, one of them caring for the latest baby, often so young that the mother has to leave her work every hour or two to nurse it. There is a day nursery in Fresno to care for the Russian babies, but the mothers prefer to leave them with neighbors. These people left Russia because of the struggle for existence there, and have only one aim in life — to buy land, at least enough for a home. Unlike the Armenians, many of whom own large orchards and vineyards about Fresno, the Russians have not yet become landowners of consequence.

Among the Americans there are more girls than married women, and so far as could be discovered nearly all use their earnings for themselves. Those who work in the

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

packing-houses out of town come from ranches owned by their parents, who could well afford to support them. They are weary of home, and long for the independence that goes with wage-earning. In the towns the conditions are almost the same. It is said that girls who wish can get work in the telephone offices or stores when the fruit season ends, but few of the Americans care for that type of labor. After three or four months' work, these girls have accumulated a respectable sum of money with which they take music lessons or go to business college. Most of the work paid for by the day, such as papering boxes, is done by Americans. The work is clean, and the wage is \$1.50 a day, but not so lucrative as certain kinds of piece-work and so does not appeal to the foreigners, who work at full speed every moment. In some places it is necessary for the foreman to go around at twelve and forbid these foreign women to touch the fruit for half an hour or they would not stop long enough to eat their lunches.

It was interesting to watch the women on their way to work in the early morning. Long before seven many could be seen going on bicycles, and others on foot, the procession presenting a motley appearance. The Russian women generally wore some loose-fitting dark waist, woolen skirt and apron. Many of the young girls were nicely dressed in suitable wash clothes. Some wore expensive white lingerie waists, others soiled cheap ones. One or two were seen in spotless white, with white shoes and sunshades, going airily to work.

The town of Fresno offers for amusement one stock theater and a few vaudeville houses. There is a roller-skating rink, a swimming pool, and a public picnic ground some distance from town. The band concerts in

## FRUIT INDUSTRIES IN CALIFORNIA

the park on Sunday are the only forms of public entertainment that could be called educational, and yet other forms might easily be supplied for the alert young workers.

During the fruit season, the older women are, as a rule, too tired to go anywhere. When it is over, the foreign colonies have their own dances and social gatherings, and the Americans have the usual life of the fairly comfortable working class in a small place, and the girls are eager for anything that affords diversion. Whatever amusements come to town are within the financial reach of nearly all.

Both in San José and in Fresno an attempt was made to discover from the women who work in the fruit industry whether it is possible for a person to earn enough by working steadily from the opening of the canneries to the end of the dried fruit season to live on the remainder of the year. Almost without exception they said, "No," or "I can't say because I don't have to do it," or "I wouldn't like to try." Only one woman was found who thought it would be possible. It takes several seasons to acquire a very remunerative speed; beginners seldom make more than 75 cents or \$1 a day, working up to \$1.50 toward the end of the season.

Little or nothing has been done by employers to improve surroundings or add comforts for the benefit of the women employed. The hours are long and most lines of work require constant standing. In December and January the open shed-like houses in use become very cold. Women sometimes keep on their wraps and stand in boxes partly filled with hot bricks, or simply endure the cold as best they can. It takes a very hardy constitution to survive the strain of many years in the

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

fruit industry. In order to earn \$2 or \$3 a day, even experienced people complain of great nervous strain. Those who earn as much as \$4 work with tense nerves and a feverish haste that means physical breakdown eventually.

It matters not with the foreign element how many children the mother has, she works through the season. One little boy was seen in a tent at a raisin packing-house in a vineyard, who was caring for a three-weeks-old brother while the mother worked. An experienced woman said this was common, and later a woman at work on a seeder was found, who had a baby just three days old. Now and then the young mother, hot and excited, stopped long enough to nurse the baby when it was brought to her. Such cases savor of the sweatshop and crowded city populations, and should not be tolerated in communities otherwise free from the worst features of modern industry.

We investigated eleven establishments in San José employing 1000 women and twelve in Fresno employing 2000. We were able to become very well acquainted with many of the women both in their homes and work places, and in the tables following some facts in regard to fifty of these women appear. The twenty-five in each table, it should be said, represent various establishments and processes in the two centers studied, and represent fairly the different types of women employed. As the terms used in connection with the form of employment are self-explanatory, no attempt has been made to describe the processes.



# FRUIT INDUSTRIES IN CALIFORNIA

TABLE I — FRESNO

NUM- BER	NATIONALITY	AGE	MARITAL CONDITION	FORM OF EMPLOYMENT	AVERAGE DAILY WAGE	LIVING WHERE	COST PER WEEK
1	American	19	Single	Wrapping dried figs	\$1.50	Home	\$4.00
2	Italian	21	Single	Packing dried figs	1.40	Home	\$3.00
3	Italian	50	Married	Packing dried figs	2.50	Home	Nothing
4	Italian	14	Single	Wrapping figs	1.50	Home	\$3.00
5	American	35	Married	Packing green grapes	1.75	Home	Nothing
6	American	40	Married	Packing green grapes	1.50	Home	Nothing
7	American	20	Married	Facing fruit boxes	2.25	Boards	\$5.00
8	American	20	Single	Facing fruit boxes	1.50	Home	Nothing
9	American	36	Married	Papering boxes	1.75	Home	Nothing
10	American	19	Single	Seeding raisins	1.00	Home	Varies
11	Armenian	19	Single	Packing dried figs	2.50	Home	Varies
12	Portuguese	47	Married	Seeding raisins	2.25	Home	Nothing
13	Armenian	25	Married	Packing figs in brick forms	2.00	Home	Nothing
14	German	14	Single	Facing dried nectarines	1.50	Home	Nothing
15	American	35	Married	Facing dried nectarines	2.00	Lodgings	\$2.75
16	Russian	45	Married	Packing raisins	3.00	Home	Varies
17	German	21	Single	Seeding raisins	1.50	Home	Varies
18	German	13	Single	Making cartons	2.50	Home	All she earns
19	Russian	16	Single	Making cartons	3.00	Home	All she earns
20	American	40	Married	Packing raisins	2.00	Lodgings	Varies
21	American	20	Single	Papering fruit boxes	1.75	Home	Nothing
22	American	18	Single	Packing dried peaches	1.50	Home	\$3.00
23	American	26	Married	Packing dried peaches	2.50	Home	All she earns
24	American	16	Single	Tying ribbon on grape boxes	1.75	Home	Nothing
25	American	43	Married	Packing green grapes in baskets	3.00	Home	Nothing

# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

TABLE II — SAN JOSÉ

NUM- BER	NATIONALITY	AGE	MARITAL CONDITION	FORM OF EMPLOYMENT	AVERAGE DAILY WAGE	LIVING WHERE	COST PER WEEK
1	American	17	Single	Wrapping glass fruit jars	\$1.30	Home	Nothing
2	American	24	Single	Facing prunes	2.25	Boards	\$3.00
3	American	52	Widow	Facing prunes	1.50	Home	\$2.00
4	Italian	15	Single	Cleaning jelly glasses by machinery	1.25	Home	\$2.00
5	German-						
6	American	16	Single	Bottling preserves	1.30	Home	Varies
	Italian-						
7	American	16	Single	Bottling peaches	1.30	Home	All she earns
8	American	49	Married	Canning tomatoes	1.50	Home	Nothing
9	Sicilian	43	Married	Preparing tomatoes for canning	2.00	Home	Nothing
10	American	16	Single	Cleaning bottles	1.30	Home	\$2.00
	Italian-						
11	American	17	Single	Filling jelly glasses	1.30	Home	Varies
12	Mexican	42	Married	Preparing tomatoes for canning	1.75	Home	Varies
13	American	18	Single	Pouring jelly and jam	1.30	Home	Nothing
14	American	40	Married	Labeling glass cans	1.50	Home	Nothing
15	Hungarian	16	Single	Peeling peaches	2.00	Home	Varies
16	Italian	14	Single	Peeling peaches	1.40	Home	Nothing
17	American	42	Widow	Pitting peaches	1.50	Home	Varies
18	American	50	Married	Filling cans	1.25	Home	All she earns
19	Irish	28	Single	Supplying fruit to canners	1.50	Home	\$4.00
20	American	35	Married	Papering boxes	1.50	Home	Nothing
21	American	16	Single	Facing prunes	.80	Home	Nothing
22	Mexican	36	Single	Facing prunes	1.75	Home	All she earns
23	American	36	Married	Facing boxes with paper	2.00	Home	Nothing
24	American	34	Single	Sorting prunes	1.60	Home	\$2.50
25	American	40	Married	Canning tomatoes	1.50	Home	Nothing
					1.75	Home	Nothing

## FRUIT INDUSTRIES IN CALIFORNIA

It will be observed that there is wide variation in age as in earning capacity and cost of living. While many women staying at home contribute to family support, others do not, and apparently have their earnings for personal use. This is particularly true of the Americans. After working hours, they may be seen walking about with very good clothes on, looking for some form of entertainment. They are the ones who need greater opportunity for social life, and higher forms of recreation. They are ambitious, and use the fruit industry only as a stepping-stone to greater achievements.

But the foreign women need this and more. They need instruction in the English language and a knowledge of the customs and standards of the country in which they live. The mothers need to be taught that their course is not only injuring their own health, but their children's as well.

Several institutions are already at work trying to extend opportunities to wage-earning women in the fruitcenters, and their efforts might well be reënforced.

## CHAPTER IX

### WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS OF PENNSYLVANIA

MUCH is known in a general way of life in the mining regions of Pennsylvania,<sup>1</sup> and very much detailed information in regard to working conditions in the mines has been given to the public, but no special investigation of the separate towns centered mainly on the social life of women has been made before this. It is, therefore, hoped that this study will contribute in a small way to a more intimate knowledge of an important body of people and their needs.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the towns, it may be well to locate definitely the two great mining sections of the state. The anthracite fields<sup>2</sup> embrace a territory of about 3300 square miles<sup>3</sup> in three parallel valleys in the northeastern part of the state, while the bituminous fields underlie about 15,800 square miles in six parallel valleys in the southwestern part of the state.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The valuable work of Dr. Peter Roberts on "Anthracite Coal Communities" should be mentioned here and should be read for a general view of the situation. Dr. Roberts himself was most helpful in this investigation not only to the director, but also to Miss Tanner and Miss Foote, the two investigators in the field.

<sup>2</sup> The general boundaries are as follows : on the north by the north branch of the Susquehanna, on the east by the Delaware and Lehigh rivers, and on the west by the Susquehanna.

<sup>3</sup> "Less than one sixth of this, or about 484 square miles, is underlaid by workable deposits of coal." "Mines and Quarries," 1902 Special Census Report, p. 675.

<sup>4</sup> Running from the Ohio and Maryland lines well on toward New York.

## WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

The counties included in the anthracite area (12 counties), with percentage of production, are : Carbon, 7.8 ; Columbia, 1.8 ; Dauphin, 1 ; Lackawanna, 29.2 ; Lebanon ;<sup>1</sup> Luzerne, 20.8 ; Northumberland, 1.1 ; Schuylkill, 2.7 ; Sullivan, .8 ; Susquehanna, 3.48 ; Wayne and Wyoming.<sup>1</sup> The counties included in the bituminous area (24 counties) are : Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Blair, Butler, Cambria, Center, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Fayette, Greene, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lycoming, Mercer, Somerset, Tioga, Washington, and Westmoreland.

Fayette, Westmoreland, Allegheny, and Cambria are the four most important counties so far as output of coal is concerned.

A tabular comparison<sup>2</sup> of the numerical importance of the two sections is now presented.

	BITUMINOUS	ANTHRACITE
Number of mines	1,023	334
Number of operators	514	119
Number of salaried officials, <sup>3</sup> etc.	3,830	3,014
Number of wage-earners <sup>3</sup>	92,095	69,691

It will be seen that the anthracite coal fields extend from Forest City on the north to a little south of Pottsville, in a long oval. This embraces three coal basins — the Wyoming, which is also the largest, including Nanticoke and Forest City, with the intervening places ; the Lehigh, lying about Hazleton, and the Schuylkill, centering about Shen-

<sup>1</sup> These counties produced nothing in 1902.

<sup>2</sup> "Mines and Quarries," 1902 Special Census Report, p. 291. The figures for normal years are nearly double for employees.

<sup>3</sup> The average number is given here.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

andoah and Mahanoy City, while the bituminous fields are scattered over a larger area, with centers at Johnstown, Greensburg, Connellsville, Punxsutawney, Spangler and Patton, Indiana and Du Bois.

With the most important centers in mind, our work was undertaken. No attempt was made to visit all the towns and patches in either section, but only to select certain places which should be typical of the best, average, and worst conditions. The places visited were as follows :

*Anthracite region.* — Audenried (Carbon Co.); Dickson and Priceburg (Lackawanna Co.); Drifton, Duryea, and Edwardsville (Luzerne Co.); Forest City (Susquehanna Co.); Freeland, Hazleton, Harleigh, Jeanesville, and Jeddo (Luzerne Co.); Jessup (Lackawanna Co.); Lattimer I and II (Luzerne Co.); Mahanoy City (Schuylkill Co.); Mayfield (Lackawanna Co.); Milnesville (Luzerne Co.); McAdoo (Schuylkill Co.); Nanticoke, Ninth District (Hazleton) (Luzerne Co.); Old Forge and Mudtown, and Olyphant (Lackawanna Co.); Parkplace (Schuylkill Co.); Pittston and West Pittston (Luzerne Co.); Shenandoah and Trenton (Schuylkill Co.); Upper Lehigh, Warrior Run, and Wilkesbarre (Luzerne Co.).

*Bituminous region.* — Adrian and Anita (Jefferson Co.); Barnesboro (Cambria Co.); Big Soldier (Jefferson Co.); Cambria (Johnstown) (Cambria Co.); Chambersville (Indiana Co.); Conemaugh and Franklin (Cambria Co.); Connellsville (Fayette Co.); Crabtree (Westmoreland Co.); Creekside (Indiana Co.); Du Bois (Clearfield Co.); Ehrenfeld (Cambria Co.); Elenora (Jefferson Co.); Eriton (Clearfield Co.); Ernest (Indiana Co.); Fayette City (Fayette Co.); Florenza (Jefferson Co.); Forbes Roads, Greensburg, Hannastown, Haydenville, Huff, Jamison I (Westmoreland Co.); Johnstown (Cambria Co.); Monongahela (Washington Co.); Mt. Pleasant (Westmoreland Co.); Patton (Cambria

## WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

Co.); Penfield (Clearfield Co.); Punxsutawney (Jefferson Co.); Rossiter (Indiana Co.); South Fork and Spangler (Cambria Co.); Sykesville (Jefferson Co.); St. Benedict (Cambria Co.); Tyler (Clearfield Co.); Walston (Jefferson Co.); Windber (Somerset Co.).

An investigation of this kind naturally resolves itself into a study of foreign population. As the Americans are found only in positions of more or less importance around the mines, it was the life of the immigrant woman in her local setting that absorbed attention. The nationalities of the immigrants are practically the same in both sections. Sixty per cent of the miners and almost all the mine laborers are Slavs,<sup>1</sup> Lithuanians, and Italians; English, Welsh, Irish, and Germans do only highly skilled work. The few Jews in the coal fields are engaged in trade, having followed the various nationalities coming into the coal fields.

A detailed account of the two sections is now presented :

### (A) *Anthracite Fields*

Probably 75 per cent of the houses in some sections are still owned by the companies, although one frequently hears it said that the company house is fast becoming a thing of the past. The newly arrived immigrant is likely to come without his family, so he boards with some one of his own race, as many as twenty or thirty men crowding into a four-room house with a man and his wife and family. In such cases three rooms, or perhaps four, are used as bedrooms, leaving only a lean-to to serve as kitchen and living room. The family sleeps in one room and the boarders in the rest, one set occupying the beds at night and another during the day, if they happen to have a night

<sup>1</sup> Including Slovaks, Ruthenians, Hungarians, Magyars, Poles, and Bohemians, as the term is used in the Pennsylvania mining regions.



## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

shift at the mine. Sometimes, however, boarders sleep in the room with the family. The woman does all the housework and cooking for the men, each man usually buying his own food and paying her a certain sum for cooking it. The houses in which such immigrants live usually have four rooms with a lean-to. They are poorly built and cold in winter. The rent averages \$1 per month per room.

After the married immigrant has been here a year or two, he brings over his family. They set up housekeeping in one of these old houses, taking boarders as just described. But they soon begin to save money to buy a house and lot. They accomplish this in the course of five or six years and usually have a house in a better locality, with five or six rooms, not very well built perhaps, but a great improvement over the old one. They have a parlor with lace curtains, rocking-chairs, and a gorgeous lamp, and in the kitchen they put a big range costing \$30 or \$40. They may not have a lawn in front of the house, but generally there is a vegetable garden at the back.

The third class of homes consists of those occupied by the skilled miners. They are usually six- or seven-room houses, comfortably built and furnished like any simple American home. In any case, the skilled workers are Americans to all intents and purposes, and have no special need of help.

Besides the housing conditions, there are certain other characteristics of the anthracite fields which deserve mention. The water supply all through the region is good, usually coming from springs in the mountains, and there is a fair supply for each locality, though not often a faucet in each house.

The natural surroundings are beautiful, but not infrequently a village grows on a culm heap or between two

## WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

culm heaps, so that the children play in coal from morning till night, and the women see nothing but blackness from the windows. The culm heap<sup>1</sup> and the breakers are inevitable evils, but it is surely not necessary for houses to be built close to them, when a walk of five minutes would bring the people to grass and often to an attractive view as well.

Throughout the anthracite fields the women among the Slavs are in the minority, and are generally married early and kept busy at home with the usual duties and many boarders. But scattered through the region are silk-mills, knitting-mills, and shirt factories, which employ young girls. In these the laws regarding child labor and the hours and conditions of work are not rigorously enforced, and many hardships result. Conditions in the silk-mills are not by any means so good as could be desired.

### (B) *Bituminous Fields*

In the bituminous fields the company house is in evidence everywhere. When an operator opens a mine, he lets a contract to a builder to put up a town of from fifty to three hundred houses. In their worst state these houses have four or five rooms, no clapboards or foundations, and a very thin coat of plaster inside, and rent for from \$4 to \$9 a month, making in general an average of \$1 per month per room as in the anthracite fields. There are no water faucets in the houses, and often there are only three or four in the town. The average house is clapboarded, but has no foundation, or only a board one. The best houses are found at Ernest and have six rooms, are clapboarded, have stone foundations and a fairly good coat of plaster and a faucet in each kitchen. In this

<sup>1</sup> Successful efforts have been made to reduce the culm heap somewhat by converting part of it into a marketable product.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

town the houses for the bosses have also an indoor closet and bath. In many places the companies erected no outdoor closets when the houses were built, and the people have had to provide them. The result is buildings which in some cases do not provide for the requirements of decency, and never for those of health. In other cases the companies had outhouses built, but they are in groups of six or eight to serve for a block. It is possible that part of these are supposed to be reserved for women and part for men, but they are rarely so used.

The immigrant in the bituminous fields has small opportunity to buy a house and lot for himself, since the company will not sell him land even if he be disposed to buy. He does not, therefore, have the same chance to improve his surroundings that he would have in the anthracite fields, and one strong incentive to saving is taken away. Yet, owing to the exigencies of bituminous mining, the company house seems to be the only practicable thing.<sup>1</sup>

In several of these towns the water supply is bad and typhoid fever not uncommon. This is not entirely the fault of the companies, as the water is not naturally so good as in the anthracite fields. At the same time some measures should be taken to make the water drinkable. In several cases there was only one place in the town where drinking water could be obtained, and often the Americans were afraid to use that without boiling.

The company towns have no sidewalks and no proper method of garbage disposal. Streets and alleys are very dirty, and there is not even a pretense of cleaning them, as there is in the anthracite fields. They clean up when there is an epidemic. These places do not give the

<sup>1</sup> The life of a mine is only about ten years, and men could not afford to own homes for such a sojourn.

## WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

impression of crowding, as do the "patches" in the anthracite fields. The worst of the houses in the former are not so bad as the worst in the latter ; but neither do the best in the one case compare with the best in the other.

The women marry young, as in the anthracite section, and are in the main given over to the arduous duties of housekeeping and taking boarders, besides trying to care for numerous small children. There are comparatively few factories here.

From the foregoing it will be seen that in many respects living conditions in both the anthracite and bituminous fields are most undesirable. Other features of the two regions, such as amusements and moral conditions, may well be discussed together.

### *Amusements*

The amusements are few in number and are practically all traceable to liquor drinking. Even where there are theaters and concerts the immigrants do not patronize them owing to their imperfect understanding of English ; and for the same reason they do not frequent even the nickelodeons and penny arcades to any extent. What characteristic social life they have centers about weddings and christenings, when a supply of liquor is bought and a carousal of several days follows. Then, too, in summer, there are many dances, with liquor always circulating freely. Every one, from the baby to the grandmother, goes to these dances. If there were no liquor sold, it is probable that such dances would be an innocent enough form of amusement, for the round dance is seldom seen. As they are actually conducted, however, women and children, as well as men, drink ; ugly tempers and evil passions are aroused, and there are frequent fights ;

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

while after the dance young men and women find opportunity to indulge their inflamed passions. During the summer many picnics are held which are prolonged till late in the evening with dancing and liquor. This is a source of grave danger to the girls, and is deplored by the better element among the immigrants themselves.

Both dances and picnics are held under various auspices. Sometimes they are conducted by one of the men's societies of the Catholic church, and sometimes by the church itself, for the purpose of raising money. Usually there is a charge of 25 cents a couple, and invariably the profits from the liquor selling go into the church treasury. Neither picnics nor balls seem to be as common in the bituminous fields as in the anthracite.

Aside from the foregoing the only amusement is beer drinking, either at home or in the saloons. In most places in the anthracite fields little pretense is made of enforcing the Sunday laws, and some of the better class of Americans are doubtful as to the wisdom of enforcement. The real question seems to be, whether it is better for men to drink at home or in the saloon. If the saloons are closed on Sunday, the men in one house together buy a keg of beer, which must be consumed by Monday morning or it will spoil. The result is a grand debauch, in which the women and children are participants. If the men could go to the saloon, the women and children would probably get no beer and the men less, because it would cost more.

In the bituminous fields saloons are not so numerous, and the laws are more strictly enforced. In the company towns there are no saloons, but to counterbalance this the beer wagon makes a visit every day or two, and the people keep beer in the house by the keg.

## WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

### *Moral Conditions*

The lax moral conditions among the immigrants arise in large part from the drink evil, but also in part from the conditions under which they live. There is no doubt that all nationalities are heavy drinkers and have brought the habit with them from their own countries. At home, however, they had but little money, and it is possible that the liquor they had was less adulterated than ours, and that it did less harm than when taken in our climate. However that may be, what they get here undoubtedly leads to most of the fights and murders among them and to much of the vice.

A difficulty arises from the necessity of a daily bath. The mine workers come home with coal dust ground into them from head to foot and find a tub bath a necessity. In winter there is no place for this except in the kitchen in the presence of the women and children. This lack of privacy is demoralizing.

The three factors of drink, crowding, and the daily bath unite to make the standard of purity in the coal fields admittedly a low one. Illegitimate children are not uncommon, though when a mother is unmarried, the priest usually makes it his business to see that the father of her child marries her.

### *Favorable Conditions*

Aside from these serious evils, little else can be charged against the immigrants. Their standard of living is lower than ours, but they change all this in an amazingly short time, if they have any chance at all. Furthermore, they are frugal and thrifty, and law-abiding and peaceable, when not under the influence of liquor. All nationalities,

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

except perhaps the Italian, are well developed, sturdy, healthy people. Taking them all in all, the immigrants in the coal fields are neither vicious nor criminal; they are only ignorant and undisciplined. Those who know them best say that they are most teachable, when those who would help them have won their confidence. Their early experiences in the New World may have given them just cause to be suspicious of the stranger, and to view with distrust any overtures that may be made to them even by persons whose motives are above reproach.

It seems desirable here for purposes of definiteness and comparison to put in tabular form certain classes of facts, in accordance with a twofold grouping, as follows:

First, general information in regard to each place studied, including population and occupations of women.

Second, social life. For lack of a better term this has been made to include amusements, clubs, and classes for women, and church undertakings of a definitely social, as distinct from a purely religious, character.<sup>1</sup> The kindergarten has been considered in undertakings for women on account of its great importance to mothers. The public schools have not been mentioned, as they are found in accordance with the law in every town.

<sup>1</sup> It is sometimes difficult to divide church work in this way without appearing to discriminate in favor of certain churches, and the fact that only one or two denominations are reported as doing special social work does not mean that the others are not doing valuable work along distinctly religious lines.



# WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

## ANTHRACITE FIELDS

TABLE I—GENERAL INFORMATION

PLACE	POPULATION <sup>1</sup>	OCCUPATIONS OF WOMEN
Audenried	2000	Housekeeping. <sup>2</sup> Work in factories near.
Dickson and Priceburg <sup>3</sup>	5000	Housekeeping. 100 girls in silk-mill.
Drifton	2129	Housekeeping.
Duryea	1500	Housekeeping.
Edwardsville	5165	Housekeeping. Work in factories in Wilkesbarre.
Forest City	4279	Housekeeping. 50 girls in silk-mill.
Freeland	5254	Housekeeping. 120 girls in silk-mill. 220 girls in overall factory.
Harleigh	585	Housekeeping. A few girls in near-by mills.
Hazleton	14,230	Housekeeping and factory work; <sup>4</sup> 498 in three shirt factories; 388 in two silk-mills; 160 in two knitting-mills; many go to Waverly factories.
Jeanesville <sup>5</sup>	1070	Housekeeping. Work in factories in Hazleton.
Jeddo	1632	Housekeeping. Work in factories in near-by towns.
Jessup	3242	Housekeeping.
Lattimer I and II	1600 <sup>6</sup>	Housekeeping. A few in near-by factories.
Mahanoy City	15,504	Housekeeping. 220 girls in three shirt factories.
Mayfield	6000 <sup>7</sup>	Housekeeping.
Milnesville	824	Housekeeping. Factory work in near-by towns.
McAdoo	2122	Housekeeping. 60 girls in shirt factory.
Nanticoke	12,116	Housekeeping. <sup>10</sup> 200 girls in two silk-mills and one hosiery-mill.
"Ninth District" <sup>8</sup>	5000 <sup>9</sup>	Housekeeping. <sup>10</sup> A few in Hazleton mills.
Old Forge and Mudtown	5630	Housekeeping. Work in Taylor factories.
Olyphant	6180	Housekeeping. 300 girls in silk-mill.
Parkplace	188	Housekeeping.
Pittston	12,556	Housekeeping. Work in factories.
West Pittston	5846	
Shenandoah	20,321	Housekeeping. Varied factory work.
Trenton	300 <sup>9</sup>	Housekeeping.
Upper Lehigh	1200	Housekeeping. 20-30 girls in near-by mills.
Warrior Run	955 <sup>11</sup>	Housekeeping. Work in factories in Wilkesbarre.
Wilkesbarre	51,721	Housekeeping. Varied industries.

<sup>1</sup> Figures from the Census of 1900 used.

<sup>2</sup> The term "housekeeping" is meant to include taking boarders, as the great majority of women engage in this work.

<sup>3</sup> The mining center frequently includes more than a political division.

<sup>4</sup> These girls come mostly from Audenried, Freeland, and other small near-by towns.

<sup>5</sup> Iron works here also employing 325 men.

<sup>6</sup> Estimated at the present time at about 2200.

<sup>7</sup> Approximate.

<sup>8</sup> Just outside the city limits of Hazelton.

<sup>9</sup> Approximate.

<sup>10</sup> Girls marry before the age of 16 as a rule, especially among the Italians.

<sup>11</sup> Now about 1200.

# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

## BITUMINOUS FIELDS

TABLE I — GENERAL INFORMATION

PLACE	POPULATION	OCCUPATIONS OF WOMEN
Adrian	800 <sup>1</sup>	Housekeeping.
Anita	2500	Housekeeping.
Barnesboro	1482 <sup>2</sup>	Housekeeping.
Big Soldier	900 <sup>1</sup>	Housekeeping.
Cambria <sup>3</sup>	1200 <sup>1</sup>	Housekeeping.
Chambersville	400 <sup>1</sup>	Housekeeping.
Conemaugh and Franklin <sup>4</sup>	2175	Housekeeping.
Connellsville <sup>6</sup>	961 <sup>5</sup>	Housekeeping.
Crabtree or Jamison IV	7160	Housekeeping.
Creekside	2000 <sup>1</sup>	Housekeeping.
Du Bois <sup>7</sup>	1000 <sup>1</sup>	Housekeeping. 100 girls in overall factory.
Ehrenfeld	9375	Housekeeping.
Elenora	567	Housekeeping.
Eriton	1500	Housekeeping.
Ernest	200 <sup>1</sup>	Housekeeping.
Fayette City	2600 <sup>1</sup>	Housekeeping.
Florenza [III]	1595	Housekeeping.
Forbes Roads or Jamison	1500 <sup>1</sup>	Housekeeping.
Greensburg <sup>9</sup>	1000 <sup>8</sup>	Housekeeping.
Hannastown or Jamison II	6508	Housekeeping.
Haydensville	2000 <sup>8</sup>	Housekeeping.
Huff <sup>10</sup>	600 <sup>8</sup>	Housekeeping. 80 in brass-fitting factory.
Jamison I	1000 <sup>8</sup>	Housekeeping.
Johnstown <sup>11</sup>	1200 <sup>8</sup>	Housekeeping. Some factory work.
Monongahela <sup>13</sup>	35,936 <sup>12</sup>	Housekeeping.
Mt. Pleasant <sup>14</sup>	5173	Housekeeping.
Patton <sup>15</sup>	4745	Housekeeping. 200 girls in glass factory.
Penfield <sup>17</sup>	2651 <sup>16</sup>	Housekeeping.
Punxsutawney <sup>18</sup>	716	Housekeeping.
	4375 <sup>19</sup>	Housekeeping. 50 girls in shirtwaist factory.
Rossiter	4000 <sup>8</sup>	Housekeeping.
South Fork	2635	Housekeeping.
Spangler	1616 <sup>20</sup>	Housekeeping.
Sykesville <sup>14</sup>	156 <sup>21</sup>	Housekeeping.
St. Benedict	400 <sup>8</sup>	Housekeeping.
Tyler <sup>14</sup>	2000 <sup>8</sup>	Housekeeping.
Walston <sup>14</sup>	1937	Housekeeping.
Windber	6000	Housekeeping. 14 girls in kindling factory at Arrow.

<sup>1</sup> Approximate. <sup>2</sup> Now about 3000. <sup>3</sup> In Johnstown city limits. <sup>4</sup> Steel works here employing several thousand men. <sup>5</sup> Both now about 6000; five sixths foreigners. <sup>6</sup> Iron mill here employing 300 men. <sup>7</sup> Resident center for small mining towns near by. Adrian Furnace, 100 Slovaks; Du Bois Iron Works, 64 Germans and Scotch; Locomotive Works, 500 Germans, Scotch, and Irish; many Italians on railroads. <sup>8</sup> Approximate. <sup>9</sup> Business center for small mining towns; residential town for retired merchants and farmers. <sup>10</sup> Brass-fitting factories here employ a great many men. <sup>11</sup> Great steel works here, also minor industries using steel and iron. <sup>12</sup> Estimated to be 45,000 now. <sup>13</sup> Factories here employing 1000. Business center for near-by mining towns. <sup>14</sup> Coke ovens here also. <sup>15</sup> Clay works here employing 500. <sup>16</sup> About 4000 now. <sup>17</sup> Lumbering and farming also employ the men here. Town a decadent one; lumbering nearly exhausted and coal mine almost worked out. <sup>18</sup> Business centers for small mining centers near. <sup>19</sup> Now estimated at 10,000. <sup>20</sup> Now about 2500. <sup>21</sup> Now estimated at 800.

# WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

## ANTHRACITE FIELDS

TABLE II — SOCIAL LIFE

PLACE	AMUSEMENTS <sup>1</sup>	CLUBS AND CENTERS FOR WOMEN	CHURCH EFFORTS
Audenried Dickson and Priceburg	Dances, picnics, excursions (with beer and whisky). Church (Catholic) picnics in summer and balls in winter. Christenings, weddings. Much drinking.		<i>Methodist</i> : Sewing class of 30, kindergarten of 120.
Drifton	Nickelodeon, dance hall; beer, etc., sold at dances.		<i>Episcopal</i> : <sup>2</sup> Women's Guild, 33 members.
Duryea Edwardsville	Dances, picnics, saloons. Nothing special here; seek amusements in near-by towns.		<i>Presbyterian</i> : Kindergarten, sewing class, cooking classes, mothers' meetings.
Forest City <sup>3</sup>	Dances, excursions, theater, saloons, etc. <sup>3</sup>		_____ <sup>4</sup>
Freeland	60 saloons, church picnics, two dance halls, Catholic entertainments.	Sewing class of 30 for girls from 12-16.	

<sup>1</sup> As the men and the women in the main enjoy their amusements together, no attempt was made to designate amusements for women alone. <sup>2</sup> Minister's salary paid by mine owners' families, who do much good. <sup>3</sup> Liquor sold on all occasions. Town drinks 1000 barrels of beer a year; said to drink more than any town in the Lackawanna Valley. <sup>4</sup> There are 6 Protestant, 4 Catholic, and 5 Greek churches. The wife of a mine owner pays part of the salary of each Protestant minister.

# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

## ANTHRACITE FIELDS—Continued

TABLE II—SOCIAL LIFE

PLACE	AMUSEMENTS	CLUBS AND CENTERS FOR WOMEN	CHURCH EFFORTS
Harleigh	Picnics; go to parks near Hazleton.	Civic Club, 100 women, chiefly Americans; United Charities: a woman visitor, sewing class of 30 girls, Friendly Visitors' Society. A free sewing class of 75 grls.	<i>Methodist</i> : Visitor.
Hazleton	Dances, picnics, saloons, two nickelodeons, one family theater, one fairly good theater. <sup>1</sup>		<i>Methodist</i> : Visitor, sewing class. <i>Presbyterian</i> : Visitor, kindergarten, industrial school.
Jeanesville	Go to Hazleton for amusements.		<i>Methodist</i> : Deaconess from Hazleton pays visits.
Jeddo	Go to Hazleton for amusements.		<i>Methodist</i> : Deaconess from Hazleton pays visits.
Jessup	Numerous saloons.		<i>Presbyterian</i> : <sup>2</sup> Visitor, kindergarten of 35-40.
Lattimer I and II	A few dances; company ice-cream and soda-water stand in Lattimer I. Go to theater in Hazleton.		
Mahanoy City	Two dance halls, one good theater, one vaudeville		

# WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

Mayfield	house, church picnics, and dances, cards, etc.	Sewing class. <sup>4</sup>	<i>Catholic</i> : General work.
Milnesville	Theater, <sup>3</sup> picnics, dances, weddings, christenings, etc. Go to Hazleton for amusements.		
McAdoo	Picnics and excursions.	(See Hazleton.)	<i>Presbyterian</i> : Kindergarten of 30, sewing and social class of 15, women.
Nanticoke	Entertainments of all kinds with liquor. <sup>5</sup>		
"Ninth District"	(See Hazleton.)	<i>Methodist</i> : Sewing circle of 25 women.	<i>Presbyterian</i> : Sewing school for mill girls of 25-30; Florence Crittenden Circle.
Old Forge and Mudtown	Same as in Duryea.		
Olyphant	40 saloons; church entertainments.	<i>Baptist</i> : Kindergarten.	<i>Catholic</i> : Theater under supervision of priest.
Parkplace	Go to Mahanoy City.		
Pittston and West Pittston	Dance halls, with liquor sold. <sup>6</sup>	<i>Baptist</i> : Sewing school.	
Shenandoah	Dances and picnics, two nickelodeons, one theater, 160 saloons.		

<sup>1</sup> Entertainments in Hazleton said to be decent. <sup>2</sup> Mission. Minister lives in Scranton. <sup>3</sup> In Carbondale, three miles away. <sup>4</sup> In Audenried. <sup>5</sup> 94 saloons, owned by Poles, besides "speak-easies." <sup>6</sup> Other amusements found in Wilkesbarre and Scranton. <sup>7</sup> Deplorable conditions found here.

# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

## ANTHRACITE FIELDS — *Continued*

TABLE II — SOCIAL LIFE

PLACE	AMUSEMENTS	CLUBS AND CENTERS FOR WOMEN	CHURCH EFFORTS
Trenton <sup>1</sup> Upper Lehigh Warrior Run Wilkesbarre <sup>2</sup>	Go to Mahanoy City. Dances, etc., in Freeland (long walk). Saloons. Theaters, concerts, penny arcades. <sup>3</sup>	Halka Singing Society, 24 Polish girls; Heights Settle- ment among Welsh mine workers (classes and kin- dergarten); Loyal Friends' Aid — a sewing class of Jewish girls.	<i>Episcopal</i> : Sewing class of 200 girls, all nationalities; sew- ing and cooking class of 500 girls. <i>Presbyterian</i> : Sewing classes at mission in Lee Park.

<sup>1</sup> No saloons. <sup>2</sup> In addition to the activities indicated many others will be found not primarily for foreigners. <sup>3</sup> It is claimed that these amusements do not reach the foreigners. They find entertainment chiefly in saloons and at balls and picnics.

# WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

## BITUMINOUS FIELDS

TABLE II — SOCIAL LIFE

PLACE	AMUSEMENTS	CLUBS OR CENTERS FOR WOMEN	CHURCH UNDERTAKINGS
Adrian	Go to Punxsutawney or to park near there. <sup>1</sup>		
Anita	Dances, occasional picnics, three saloons, nickelodeon. Go to Punxsutawney.		<i>Catholic</i> : <sup>2</sup> Sisters' House.
Barnesboro	One theater, two moving-picture shows (none objectionable), dances at park and in hall (Slovak). (See Sykesville.)		
Big Soldier Cambria	Five dance halls (fair). (See Johnstown. <sup>3</sup> )	(See Johnstown.)	
Chambersville Conemaugh and Franklin	Very little social life. Very few excursions or picnics, but balls with liquors; weddings and christenings;		— <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> No saloon in town, but beer wagon is regular. <sup>2</sup> Priest practically controls town. <sup>3</sup> Saloon laws enforced; no liquor sold to minors or on Sunday, but many buy a barrel of beer to last over Sunday (the boarders club together). <sup>4</sup> For three years the Presbyterian minister has been trying to organize the ministers but so far without result.



# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

## BITUMINOUS FIELDS—Continued

TABLE II—SOCIAL LIFE

PLACE	AMUSEMENTS	CLUBS OR CENTERS FOR WOMEN	CHURCH UNDERTAKINGS
Connellsville	one nickelodeon, eight saloons, Y. M. C. A. library. Also go to Johnstown. Two theaters, moving-picture shows, two parks near, dances; saloons well patronized; weddings, christenings.	W. C. T. U. (50 members) has done some civic work and started Loyal Legion for children. Auxiliary to Y. M. C. A. (200 members) helps to relieve the poor.	
Crabtree or Jamison IV Creekside	Beer wagon. Go to Greensburg. One saloon. Social life among the Americans as in any small town.		
Du Bois	Card playing, drinking, christenings, weddings, one fairly good theater, two good moving-picture shows.	Women's Auxiliary to Y. M. C. A. Conductors Club for girls (anxious to start industrial work for poorer girls).	

# WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

Ehrenfeld	Long walks; no saloons but bring beer from South Fork. Theater at South Fork.		
Elenora	Go to Punxsutawney. Beer wagon.		<i>Presbyterian</i> ; Sewing society.
Eriton	Play cards; drinking parties at weddings and christenings. Go to Sykesville to moving-picture show or to park near there.		(No churches.)
Ernest	Occasional sociables among Americans. No saloons, but beer wagon. Go to Indiana.		
Fayette City	Drinking at weddings and christenings and over Sunday. <sup>1</sup> One moving-picture show; two dance halls. Beer wagon. Go to Punxsutawney or Anita.	W.C.T.U. (20 members). Women's Auxiliary to Y.M.C.A.	
Florenza	Beer wagon. Go to Greensburg.		(No churches.)
Forbes Roads or Jamison III Greensburg	Social life as in any American town. One theater, two nickelodeons, two roller skating-rinks, dances, but no	Friday Club; Tuesday Club (musical); card clubs; W.C.T.U. and Y.W.C.T.U.	Usual societies for church members. Needlework Guild (100 women of different churches) sews for charity.

<sup>1</sup> Fayette City is a prohibition town, but liquor is sold in great quantities; three large drinking clubs; druggists sell liquor openly.

# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

BITUMINOUS FIELDS—Continued  
TABLE II—SOCIAL LIFE

PLACE	AMUSEMENTS	CLUBS OR CENTERS FOR WOMEN	CHURCH UNDERTAKINGS
Hannastown or Jamison II	liquor sold. Well-conducted park with usual attractions. Few picnics; occasional moving-pictures and stereopticon views in schoolhouse by missionary. No saloon, but beer wagon. Go to Greensburg or Irwin for dances.	Sewing class of girls 8-14 years.	(No churches.) <i>Presbyterian</i> : Visitor, supported by church in Greensburg.
Haydenville	Parks. Foreigners have dances and beer in their homes. Go to Greensburg. Social life as in any American small town. Two saloons in hotels. Go to Greensburg. Few excursions and picnics. Beer wagon. Go to Greensburg.	Bazaar Society (15 girls from 12-16 years).	(No churches.) <i>Methodist</i> : Ladies' Aid; Social Christian Workers.
Jamison I	Two good theaters; four good moving-picture shows. <sup>1</sup> Park; dances.	Civic Club (200 members) has organized Juvenile Court, has vacation schools (industrial), reaches moth-	
Johnstown			

# WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

Monongahela	Weddings, christenings, drinking, etc. Moving-picture show, one fair theater, four dance halls.	ers through visiting, etc. Benevolent Society; Children's Aid; Women's Auxiliary to Y.M.C.A. Mothers' clubs. Carnegie Library, patronized a good deal by foreign children.	<i>Methodist</i> : Visitor, who has a sewing school and kindergarten games for the smaller children.
Mt. Pleasant	Card-playing, walking, and shooting, christenings and weddings. One fair theater, three moving-picture shows, three dance halls where liquor is sold.	W.C.T.U. (100 members) does some civic work.	<i>Presbyterian</i> : Ladies' Home Mission Society. <i>Methodist</i> : Trying to start industrial work.
Patton	Two nickelodeons, skating-rink, park, and pavilion for dancing, with beer sold; dance halls; six saloons; two wholesale liquor houses, one brewery.	A social club for sewing, cards, etc. (15 American women).	
Penfield	Social life somewhat lower than in usual American town. Girls on streets a good deal in the evening. <sup>2</sup>		<i>Presbyterian</i> : Sewing society of 45 girls, 8-14 years (few foreigners).

<sup>1</sup> Foreigners patronize these more than they do the theaters.

<sup>2</sup> Girls marry as early as fourteen frequently.

# WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

## BITUMINOUS FIELDS—Continued

TABLE II—SOCIAL LIFE

PLACE	AMUSEMENTS	CLUBS OR CENTERS FOR WOMEN	CHURCH UNDERTAKINGS
Punxsutawney	Few dances; cards; people from small mining towns near by come in to moving-picture shows and saloons. <sup>1</sup> One fairly good theater; three moving-picture shows; two dance halls.		
Rosster	Moving pictures; one small dance hall; two saloons; great amount of liquor sold.		<i>Presbyterian</i> : Kindergarten and industrial work under missionary.
South Fork	Drinking and card-playing; one fair theater, two good moving-picture shows.		
Spangler	Great deal of dancing; one theater. Go to Barnesboro.		
Sykesville	Card-playing, christenings, weddings, one moving-picture show, one park near by.		

## WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

St. Benedict	Go to Spangler and Barnesboro.	
Tyler	Merry-go-round; one saloon.	
Walston	Celebration of saints' days, weddings, christenings; playing cards and shooting; two fair dance halls, with beer; one moving-picture show. No saloon, but beer wagon every day.	
Windber	Dances, with liquors. <sup>2</sup> One theater (plays such that women are sometimes not admitted); one nickelodeon (some pictures indecent).	<i>Presbyterian</i> : Sewing class of 24 girls, 5-16 years. Also house-to-house visiting to teach women cooking, machine sewing, etc.

<sup>1</sup> People work too hard for much social life. <sup>2</sup> Catholics have dances in basements of churches, also moving pictures and other entertainments.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

### SUMMARY

The situation may be summed up in this way : In the coal fields there are, roughly speaking, three quarters of a million immigrants, — men, women, and children, — most of them of Slavic races, who have brought over to this country the manners and customs of a lower civilization, and who are living under conditions which tend to perpetuate their civilization instead of raising them to a higher level. They live by themselves, not mingling with Americans, and usually knowing them only as arrogant and unjust superiors. They live together as far as possible, they work together in gangs, they go to their own churches where the service is in their own tongue, and they trade at stores where there are clerks of their own race. In spite of all this, the men do learn some English in the course of a few years, but many women never learn any. The children are more likely to acquire it, but when they go to the parochial schools, as most of them do, they get only a smattering. The immigrants have practically no opportunity to learn anything of our history and traditions or about our standards of living and morality.

In the better sections of the towns, quite apart from these immigrants, live the Americans and the immigrants of Anglo-Saxon and Celtic origin, holding the best positions and frequently scorning the Slavs. The proportion between these two classes, of course, varies considerably, but probably in towns of more than 6000 it is usually from 50 to 75 per cent Slav and from 25 to 50 per cent American, German, English, Welsh, and Irish, while in the small patches not more than from 10 to 20 per cent would belong to the latter class.

**Betterment Work.** — The agencies at work American-



## WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

izing these immigrants are few and feeble. The only Protestant work at all systematized and extensive is that undertaken by the Presbyterian church and by the Young Men's Christian Association. The Presbyterians have a committee in the anthracite fields, and another in the bituminous region, in charge of the work among the foreign-speaking peoples, and these committees have established missionaries in nearly all of the larger towns, and they go out from these to the smaller places. Their work for the most part is professedly religious, consisting of holding services in the native language of the people and in the distribution of tracts, but some of the missionaries also do a great deal of house-to-house visiting, protecting the people from injustice in one form or another, and teaching them their legal rights. They also have women who conduct sewing and cooking classes and visit in the homes, and nearly all the kindergartens in the coal fields are supported by the Presbyterians. In a few places Methodists, Episcopalians, and Baptists have missionaries. Aside from these, no other Protestant churches are working among the foreigners.

There are various explanations as to the lack of Protestant activity. Among them must undoubtedly be put the indifference referred to above, but, in justice to the churches, other causes should be noted. One is that the efforts of the Presbyterian church seem to have met with small results compared with the money and energy expended. This has deterred others. Those who have had charge of this work say they have met almost insuperable difficulties in finding the right men and women for the work.<sup>1</sup> In several cases missionaries have proved

<sup>1</sup>The great difficulty, of course, is in getting suitable people who are at the same time familiar with the Slavic tongues.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

to be of bad character, and the priests are still making capital out of this. In cases where ex-Catholics were engaged the people looked upon them as renegades and would have nothing to do with them. All together, the men on the committees in charge of the work feel that it is slow and shows small results.

A second reason is to be found in the weakness of the Protestant churches all through the coal fields. The Protestant population consists of Anglo-Saxons, and they are moving out of these fields as the Slavs come in, so that the congregations are steadily diminishing through no fault of their own.

The strongest reason of all, however, lies in the fact that practically all of these immigrants are Roman Catholics. There are a few who belong to the Orthodox Greek church and some who are Lutherans or Calvinists, but the great majority were brought up Catholics and fear and respect the priest at least enough to keep away from Protestant churches. The policy of the Roman Catholic church is to give the people priests of their own nationality as far as possible. The priests in the coal fields are, as a rule, foreign born and bred, and in many cases speak and understand English imperfectly. They know little of American ideas and ideals, and often they fear the liberty of thought and speech characteristic of the country because they believe it breeds disloyalty to the church. They use their influence, therefore, to isolate their people. In some cases they urge them not to learn English. In all cases they forbid them to have any dealings with Protestant ministers or to enter classes that have any religious features.

Their most permanent hold upon the people is probably gained through the parochial schools. In the bituminous

## WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

fields there are comparatively few of these, but in the anthracite region they are numerous. Here, in many places, it is estimated that 90 per cent of the children attend them, which means that practically 90 per cent never get into the public schools and so have no real opportunity to become Americanized. It was difficult to get accurate information about the parochial schools because, unlike the public schools, they do not report to the local or state superintendent, but it appears that they<sup>1</sup> are inferior to the public schools both in buildings and instruction. They rarely do more than fulfil the law as regards the teaching of English, and in some cases their professed object is to keep the children speaking their native tongue.

The Roman Catholic church is undoubtedly the strongest power in the coal fields, and any agency that reaches the immigrants must deal with the church in one way or another. This fact alone should explain why the work of Protestant churches shows such meager results. The bolder spirits, the more restless or dissatisfied minds, can sometimes be touched, but not the rank and file, and the women least of all. The priests have repeatedly broken up kindergartens and classes when they heard that the Bible was read or a hymn sung in them, and they have no hesitation in denouncing from the pulpit either a school or an individual.

For the same reasons the Young Men's Christian Association works under disadvantages, though not to so great a degree as do the churches. Occasionally a priest is on friendly terms with the secretary and encourages his people to make use of the association rooms, and to attend classes which have no religious features. In most cases

<sup>1</sup> Exceptions being the Irish and German parochial schools.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

he is openly hostile, while in a few cases he is passive but watchful to see that members of his flock do not slip away. The Young Men's Christian Association secretaries admit frankly that even they do not touch the great body of immigrants, but they hope, by emphasizing their purely educational features, to widen their influence.

The Roman Catholic church seems to confine itself largely to mere formal requirements. It has some benefit societies for men and women, and these societies give dances and balls and, when the priest is so disposed, plays or entertainments. In some cases the priest organizes temperance societies, but this seems to be exceptional.

It seldom appears that the priest sets forces at work to teach the people how to live better, to keep themselves and their houses clean, or that he makes any effort to improve the bad housing conditions and intemperance, both of which result in so much immorality.

Before closing this chapter, the more obvious needs of the people in the Pennsylvania mining regions might be summed up under the following six heads :

1. They need better houses at reasonable rents.
2. They need public baths, either free or with a nominal charge, in every town and "patch" throughout the coal fields. Such baths, if sufficient in number, would do away with the kitchen bath, and would surely help toward better moral conditions.
3. They need places of amusement to offset the influence of the saloon.
4. They need to mingle with Americans who are kindly disposed toward them ; the women in this way to have opportunities to learn better methods of housekeeping, and caring for children and the sick.

## WOMEN IN THE COAL FIELDS

5. They need simple lectures or some other form of instruction in our laws, customs, and history.

6. And, most important of all, they need to learn the English language.

That is, in brief, they need a chance to become good Americans, and the withholding of this opportunity may eventually jeopardize the moral standards of a free people.

## CHAPTER X

### UPLIFTING FORCES

No study of women workers can be complete without including in it some discussion of the betterment forces at work in their behalf. It is extremely rare to find a community entirely unmindful of the needs of this class of women, although there are some well-nigh lacking in social spirit. And we have yet to find the place where greater opportunities could not be extended advantageously.

While the largest cities furnish the story of largest endeavor, they, at the same time, reveal the gravest need. Multitudes of girls never come in touch with movements undertaken for their benefit. Thousands have never heard of settlement classes, or trade unions, or working girls' clubs, and many more look suspicious when these are mentioned. But notwithstanding the truth of this, one of the most encouraging features of a study of industrial life is the evidence that so much is being done by interested bodies to offset the somewhat deadening influences of toil as it exists to-day.

The fact that so many different groups representing varying interests are awake to the needs of wage-earning women is one of the most hopeful signs of the times, and is an excellent indication of the spread of democratic principles. Under our present industrial organization, some groups bear an undue burden of the hardships of life, and inasmuch as this is largely the result of accident of

## UPLIFTING FORCES

birth or of training, it would seem that a truly democratic people would feel impelled to eliminate, wherever possible, the element of unfairness from the struggle, and remove the handicaps for which society is responsible.

A wider knowledge of general labor conditions as they exist would go far toward creating a more sympathetic coöperation on the part of the public, which alone is powerful to effect changes. People are learning, slowly it is true, that the welfare of all necessitates the welfare of each, and they are realizing more keenly than ever before that the ideal of national supremacy cannot be attained so long as millions of women are left to flounder in the misery and gloom of an industrial situation they cannot all understand, and even if they could understand, could not change unaided.

The factory girl, the shop girl, the college girl, the woman in the home, the woman active in public welfare, and the woman in society, as well as all the men in the nation, should make common cause of race improvement, and no far-reaching improvement is possible while young girls are allowed to exhaust their physical energy and jeopardize their moral integrity in occupations where the remuneration practically precludes a normal standard of life. The college girl with her books, and the older woman with her problems, must extend 'a helping hand to the girl and the woman whose lot is cast in factory or shop. They are all of the same clay and wonderfully alike, as those who have extended hands across the chasm have found. Favoring circumstances have given to one group more of the graces of life, but not more natural charm, nor greater human interest. Mutual advantage and inspiration must come from coöperation on the part of these two divisions of womankind. It is not



## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

charity that is needed by the one, but a broader human sympathy, a sympathy that will protect the weaker from injustice.

It will not be possible to enumerate here all the efforts for the improvement of industrial conditions found in the cities and towns covered by the investigation. The aim is rather to discuss the character of the largest movements only, and through these to present the scope of community interest in wage-earning women. This must not be construed as a disparagement of the small undertakings which are often of great social value. The young woman fresh from college who conducts a sewing class in her father's factory for ten girls, and the young matron who opens her home once a month to the girls in her husband's mill, are entitled to commendation, but their work is not a sufficiently important contribution to the large field of industrial amelioration to warrant its inclusion among the really significant forces.

The uplifting agencies found in the places studied are, in the main, those familiar to all who keep in touch with social progress, but they are nevertheless of sufficient importance to bear further discussion and appreciation.

Conspicuous among the forces leading to improvement is careful investigation of conditions that exist, and this may well be considered first.

**Investigation by Public and Private Agencies.**—The study of industrial conditions with a view to changing them for the better, must be accorded a high place among betterment forces at work. Prominent among such studies are those undertaken from time to time by state and nation through their departments of labor. Many states have followed the lead of Massachusetts, and have given the public the benefit of their far-reaching inquiries.

## UPLIFTING FORCES

In addition to these, the reports of the factory inspectors frequently contain much that is instructive in regard to the labor of women under the jurisdiction of such inspectors.

The federal investigation of the work of women and children, and the effect of industry upon them, recently completed, is the most extensive study of the kind ever carried on in this country, and the results are awaited with interest. No private organization could possibly undertake so extended a work, both on account of the difficulty of securing large funds, and on account of a lack of mandatory power which the government possesses. It would seem highly desirable, then, that the federal government should make such investigation a regular part of its duty, thereby leaving private bodies free to establish lines of activity based on the information thus gained. Wider knowledge as to the effects of wage-earning upon women and the race is undoubtedly a social necessity. Girls are too valuable to be wantonly sacrificed before the Moloch of Industry. If their young lives or future usefulness are being jeopardized, society at large should know about it, and the proper authorities should take steps to avert the danger. Far-reaching studies, therefore, whether made by the government or by private organizations, must always be the basis of enlightened betterment undertakings. The true story of industry must be told whether conditions be good, bad, or indifferent, notwithstanding the fact that persons high in political or social life may be involved. The pressure of public sentiment might lead such persons to have their establishments above reproach in the future.

Among private organizations conducting investigations, and striving to establish a higher standard in industry, is

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

the Consumers' League, with national<sup>1</sup> headquarters in New York City, and branches in various states.

The work of the league is based on a recognition of the consumer's place in determining the conditions of production and distribution. The league sees clearly that, under the lash of competition, merchants frequently endanger public health and public morals; the former, by placing on the market ready-made clothing fresh from the sweater's den, and often foul with disease; the latter, by subjecting saleswomen and children to undue hardships, not even mitigated by adequate wages. People generally are not accustomed to think of these dangers, or, if they do think of them occasionally, they are apt to dismiss such unpleasant thoughts from their minds as disturbing and useless. They know too well the futility of individual efforts. Such persons would not find their efforts futile if they coöperated with a league the aims and methods of which may be learned from the following statement issued by the Consumers' League of New York City:

*Aim.* — Through public sentiment to improve industrial conditions for women and children by securing strict regulation of child labor, and a shorter working day for women employed in factories and stores. To obtain for all consumers pure food and garments made under sanitary conditions.

*Method.* — To urge the shopping public to give their custom to the fairest employers, thus making it commercially profitable for others to come up to the same standard.

Closely allied with investigation, and often a direct result of it, is the making of laws designed to lessen the hardships of the workers.

<sup>1</sup> The fact that Mrs. Florence Kelly directs the national work is sufficient indication of its great value.

TABLE SHOWING TYPES OF STATE LEGISLATION FOR WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

[illegible]



## UPLIFTING FORCES

**Legislation.** — As a result of agitation based, in most instances, on the exposure of specific cases of industrial injustice, many of the states have enacted laws for the protection of women. The states with recently developed manufacturing interest are allowing evils to pass unnoticed by law in the eagerness for commercial expansion. The same course was followed in the older states, until there came a revulsion of popular feeling, and thinking people insisted upon protecting wage-earning women from rapacious employers.

The accompanying table is designed to show the legal protection afforded to women in industry.<sup>1</sup>

Following a consideration of the state's method of helping labor, may fittingly come a discussion of labor's own awakening.

**Trade Unions.** — For about half a century trade organizations have been striving by fair means and foul to get a voice in the conduct of business for the avowed purpose of improving their own condition. The ends for which they have striven are laudable. They have been calling for sanitary workshops and living wages, for shorter hours and greater certainty of employment, and all the time emphasizing their right to be heard. This movement is especially worthy of notice, because it is a movement by the wage-workers for the wage-workers. This, in theory at least, should be the most hopeful of all undertakings. These people have set up for themselves a definite standard of living which they hope to attain when thoroughly organized in their trades.

Whatever may be said about the methods sometimes employed by trade unions, it must be admitted that their

<sup>1</sup> The Bulletins of Labor issued bimonthly in Washington, D.C., enable one to keep in touch with the changes that come from time to time.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

theory of industrial betterment is sound. They are attempting to push themselves up against forces frequently conspiring to keep them down. This opposition has lent a strength and militant vigor to their purpose. Industrial betterment of this kind must tend to produce a virile body of citizens, and the test of any ameliorative work must, in the last analysis, be the effectiveness of the citizens it produces.

Trade unionism has only recently seized the imagination of women. Its possibilities are just beginning to be realized by representative bodies of women, and by wage-earners themselves.

Many women feel that their stay in the industrial world is temporary, and they are either indifferent to the conditions under which they must work for a time, or they are unwilling to submit to what they frequently regard as the tyranny of leaders, preferring rather to endure low wages and bad sanitation, if need be, till marriage sets them free. But the more intelligent women see the advantages of organization, and are uniting with others of their trade for mutual benefit.

Strong unions of women were found in New York and Chicago, and also in some of the smaller cities included in this investigation. Mere numbers alone do not tell the strength of unionism. In fact, it is extremely hard to get accurate information about membership, both on account of poor bookkeeping, and fear lest known facts of membership will militate against individuals.

This movement has received a great impetus during the last few years from the Woman's Trade Union League, a vigorous organization of trade unionists, and non-wage-earners in sympathy with the ideals of unionism. In addition to the definite work of promoting organization, the



## UPLIFTING FORCES

league has accomplished much in the way of fostering a sentiment in favor of organized labor among those who have been heretofore antagonistic. There is a National<sup>1</sup> League which is doing aggressive work, and there are virile state leagues maintaining offices in New York, Chicago, Boston, and St. Louis.

But the wage-earner is not alone in desiring better conditions. Many employers are giving much time, attention, and money in trying to bring about more pleasant relations with their employees, and the efforts of such men are worthy of consideration.

**Employers' Welfare Work.** — Several hundred employers in the United States are carrying on some kind of betterment work for their employees, while a dozen or more stand out prominently for their unusual, even notable, undertakings. In general, Welfare Work includes: 1. Improved physical conditions; 2. Opportunity for rest and recreation; 3. Educational features; and 4. Benefit funds. Each of these things is good in itself, as employees well know, but they often view the employer's effort to bestow them with poorly masked suspicion. They enjoy social and recreational facilities, but their interest centers in higher wages, which will enable them to provide themselves with the good things of life.

On the employer's side there is always the temptation to turn to business profit the improved conditions his generosity has made possible, and so his Welfare Work may degenerate into mere advertising, and his employees be exploited to their humiliation.

But we must make a clear line of demarcation between the schemes of an enterprising publicity agent and genu-

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Raymond Robins is president of the National League, and the headquarters are at 275 La Salle St., Chicago.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

ine, purposeful betterment activities. The value of Welfare Work must ever depend on the employer who undertakes it; and when he is the means of rousing his employees to action, of encouraging them to evolve methods of self-improvement, and of stimulating them to an appreciation of the value of doing things for themselves, he has made a contribution to the solution of industrial difficulties. Labor and Capital working together for mutual advantage is undoubtedly the ideal relationship.

We have found that wage-earning woman has evoked interest in her well-being in the ranks of labor, and among employers, as well as in state and nation, but these are not all. Each community furnishes its quota of activities which are directly, as well as indirectly, helping the girl who works to meet her difficult problems. The ones which we shall consider here may be classed as UNDERTAKINGS OF INTERESTED GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS, and these include Social Settlements, the Association of Working Girls' Clubs, Housing efforts, and the Young Women's Christian Associations, which will now be considered in the foregoing order.

**Social Settlements.**—It is hardly necessary to speak of the great educational and social work for young wage-earning women carried on in the large cities, and in some smaller ones, by the institutions known to the world through such inspired workers as Jane Addams and Mary McDowell in Chicago, and Lillian Wald and Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch in New York. Settlements have come to be recognized as a force of permanent value wherever they exist. In one New England town the sole meeting place for mill girls was the little settlement house, and the girls who found their way there felt repaid for the effort it cost after a long, weary day at their machines.

## UPLIFTING FORCES

The settlements in New York and Chicago have been at the forefront in urging a careful study of working conditions, as well as in directing certain specific studies from time to time. It is well understood that settlement leaders successfully urged upon Congress the necessity for its recent investigation of the work of women and children,—the investigation referred to earlier in this chapter. In other ways, too, they contribute to the lives of working girls. They make possible social meetings, educational classes, and summer outings that would otherwise be impossible for thousands of young women in the great cities.

**The Association of Working Girls' Clubs.** — The name of Grace H. Dodge must ever be associated with clubs for working girls, for out of her work in New York City, more than twenty years ago, has grown an organization that bids fair to become nation wide in its scope. While the Association of Working Girls' Clubs is at present confined to the Eastern states, the same type of club is found all over the country. Miss Dodge's own definition of such a club is, "an organization formed among busy women and busy girls to secure by coöperation means of self-support, opportunities for social intercourse, and the development of higher and nobler aims." In these clubs women of different social grades meet on a common footing and are mutually helpful.

In 1885 a dozen clubs with a membership of several hundred united under the name of the New York Association of Working Girls' Societies, and this, after some years, was absorbed by an Interstate League embracing five state associations with affiliated clubs in other states, and having a membership of some thousands. The activities of this organization in New York typify all, and

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

will serve to show the scope of their undertakings. One of the most important features is a mutual benefit fund in which girls are insured against sickness or death at a rate of twenty-five or forty cents a month. This carries with it, also, certain hospital privileges. Then there are summer homes where girls may enjoy a vacation for \$4 a week. This does not place summer outings within the reach of the most poorly paid workers, but there are many others to whom this rate is a boon.

For these and other reasons the association deserves to succeed. It is an ameliorative force of much importance.

It is but a step in thought from the club for social and inspirational purposes to the residential club, where girls may live amid good surroundings for a reasonable rate. This brings us to a consideration of attempts to house-working women.

**Housing of Wage-earning Women.** — In many of the industrial centers where our investigation carried us, we found "homes," hotels, or clubs maintained, by philanthropically disposed persons, for girls on a low wage. The Young Women's Christian Association is a pioneer in this direction, and its boarding homes may be found in every city of considerable size in the United States. Other organizations and individuals have undertaken similar work, until now the cry is raised in some quarters that such institutions are a menace to the girls who are fighting for a higher wage. Undoubtedly they would be undesirable if they made wage-earners objects of charity, but when they represent an honest effort to supply a pleasant home at a low rate to young girls away from the restraining influence of their parents, and when the cost of accommodation is actually paid for, there should be no objections raised.

## UPLIFTING FORCES

It is extremely difficult for young women to find satisfactory boarding places in great cities, and much of the annual moral wreckage can be traced to the forlorn isolation of the hall bedroom. So it would seem that coöperative, self-supporting, self-governing, residential clubs could fill an urgent need, particularly among girls who are young, inexperienced, and poorly paid. There are a number of such homes in existence, and their work is deserving of commendation. The Eleanor Clubs<sup>1</sup> of Chicago may be cited as an illustration, because they have passed the experimental stage, as the initial club represents twelve years of successful achievement. There are now five clubs in different parts of the city, accommodating in all about 350 guests at a rate of from \$2.75 to \$4.50 a week. The plan of organization is to equip a house large enough for at least sixty guests, and to put this in charge of a broad-minded superintendent, and the necessary house-keeping and clerical assistants. A fund of a few hundred dollars is then advanced to meet the exigencies of the first month or two, and the house is ready for occupancy. Each club has attractive parlors for the use of residents and their friends, and a library and reading-room for the free use of all. Laundry privileges are provided at a nominal charge, and sewing-machines are furnished for general use.

The income from guests covers all the expenses of the clubs, including interest on the sum spent for furnishings, and advanced in each case by the president of the organization operating the clubs. This interest is turned over to a fund for the benefit of sick or needy girls. The secret of the financial success of the clubs is expert business administration.

<sup>1</sup> Operated by the Eleanor Association, 40 Randolph St., Chicago, Miss Ina Law Robertson, President.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

There are many educational, social, and recreational features connected with the clubs, and a summer camp admirably planned, constructed, and managed is maintained at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. A long waiting list testifies to the popularity of the Eleanor Clubs among the girls who work in various occupations in Chicago.

In all such undertakings some one must be found to carry the burdens of organization and administration, since busy young girls have neither the time nor experience, and seldom the requisite initiative. Working women coming together in such groups have unusual opportunities for self-improvement, and for developing a much-needed *esprit de corps*.

The last specific work which remains to be considered among the uplifting forces in communities where young women are following industrial careers is —

**The Young Women's Christian Association.** — For over a generation this organization has been trying to meet the needs of working girls all over the country. To this end, it has erected hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of buildings where classes are conducted for a small fee, and clubs of various kinds meet, and social gatherings are held. Besides this, the association carries on work in over four hundred factories throughout the country. It maintains lunch and rest rooms in these establishments, and strives to make the noon hour and other free time pleasant. The many interesting entertainments are managed by committees of the girls in coöperation with the industrial secretary of the association. So valuable do employers regard this work that they support it generously.

In addition to the foregoing activities the associations maintain employment bureaus and, last year, found em-

## UPLIFTING FORCES

ployment for over twenty thousand girls. The Brooklyn Young Women's Christian Association furnishes an excellent example of what a model employment bureau can do in a community. This department is in the hands of well-trained women who, through a masterly system of coöperation with various city institutions, keep in touch with worthy girls and women in need of work. But the association is not content merely to fill places ; it carries on an elaborate system of investigation, so that the bureau may know the character of the establishments, as well as the requirements of the positions. This work has developed along the lines of the Alliance Employment Bureau in New York, and the Women's Educational and Industrial Union in Boston, both of which organizations are doing notable work in investigation as well as in finding positions for girls.

The Brooklyn Association maintains in addition to many other activities a well-equipped night school where girls may learn anything from millinery to English literature. Besides a religious service on Sunday afternoon, there is a flourishing Social Problems Club, where, under the leadership of prominent speakers, young working women discuss questions relating to industry and social organization. This is the story of one prosperous association, but similar stories could be told of scores of others all over the land.

At first glance one might suppose that such an array of nation-wide undertakings as has been presented, when added to countless local efforts, would reach every woman working for a daily wage. But, as a matter of fact, thousands of girls never come in contact with any uplifting agency. They know the nickel theaters, and the dance halls, and the glare of the streets, but they know nothing



## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

of the pleasant entertainments open to them in places entirely safe in character. During our investigation we found many girls in Chicago who had never heard of the public library ; girls in New York who looked bewildered when told about social settlements ; and girls in New England towns who did not know that there were places where they could have a good time and remain decent.

There is undoubtedly need for concerted action. All organizations should work together to extend their benefits, and to eliminate wasteful duplication of effort. In the extension of opportunity to wage-earning women, there is work for all. Trained students of society, practical social workers, and all good citizens should coöperate in aggressive action to make our democracy more of a reality in the industrial world.

## CHAPTER XI

### SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

ONE cannot tarry long with young working women without feeling the great lack of opportunity in too many of their lives. Their very youth is often a handicap. They were drawn into industry before they learned how to do anything well, and they have rushed along, sometimes in a daring, sometimes in a hopeless, fashion, now acquiring skill and again dropping below mediocrity or never rising above gross incompetency. These young creatures have but little choice of occupation. They drift inevitably into the shop or into the factory, according to local circumstances. The department store lures schoolgirls into its maw because of its many surface attractions, and they frequently fare worse than those who earn their daily bread making boxes or clothes or working with the dirty textiles.

So many doors stand invitingly open to the unskilled that it does not occur to girls that they could do much better if they only knew how to do some one thing even fairly well. Experiments in the Manhattan Trade School, for example, have proved, beyond a doubt, the great value of trade training to the young girl who must work. Her parents are the gainers in the end, since her skill enables her to get a much higher wage at the start than she could otherwise obtain. It is true that such opportunity for trade instruction is not possible for all, and yet it does not seem too much to hope that the not distant future

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

will see the public schools supplying in a measure this type of training.

If woman is to work in the industrial world, then it behooves society to make her an efficient worker. Too many wage-earners to-day are inefficient. Every one knows how difficult it is to get anything done in a satisfactory manner, whether it be plumbing or making clothes. One of the great needs, then, is a higher standard of efficiency for all types of work.

The expectation of a rather short working life on the part of most girls is thought to account for their lukewarm interest in acquiring great skill along any line. Yet it seems that interest might be stimulated by the right type of training in the schools before the wage-earning age is reached. This is something to aim at. In the meantime, other organizations might well extend opportunities of which girls could avail themselves outside of working hours, where this could be done without injury to health.<sup>1</sup> While we deplore the lack of efficiency in many women workers, we must not overlook the fact that others have attained a high grade of skill for which they are not adequately compensated. The employer, when he is approached for higher wages, may charge the girl with incompetency, and some will support his contention that he pays her more than she is worth. This is fallacious. If it were true, he would not continue to employ her on such terms.

Unquestionably, the most serious problems that the young girl at work has to face are low wages and the constant jeopardizing of her health by the occupation in which she engages. Where wages are concerned, all

<sup>1</sup> The Young Women's Christian Association does this systematically in 190 cities and towns in the United States.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

averages are deceptive and need to be interpreted in terms of actual time employed during fifty-two weeks in any year. It is the exceptional wage-earning woman who has uninterrupted employment. And this does not mean the worker of exceptional ability, but rather the one of unusual good fortune. Employers are too ready to say that intermittent employment does not work hardship for their particular employees, inasmuch as they all live at home and welcome occasional vacations. While it is true that 1304 of the 1476 interviewed in New York, and 1618 of the 1914 in Chicago, lived at home, it is equally true that only 58 in the first group and 75 in the second appeared to have their earnings for personal use ; that is, paid nothing for board and lodging. The vicious and unsupported theory that girls flock to the factories and stores for "pin money" seems even yet to have a firm hold in the employer's mind. The necessity for self-support becomes the dominant force in driving the young girl out to seek employment, and in compelling her to keep her place once she has obtained it.

The nerve-racking intensity of work in a modern factory makes a day's labor no pleasing pastime. It robs the girl of her vitality ; it steals her youth ; it breaks her health ; and too often it blunts her moral sense. It would seem that factory work must be accommodated to the girl or the girl taken out of the factory. The prime function of woman in society is not "speeding up" on a machine ; it is not turning out so many dozen gross of buttons or cans in a day ; it is not making the heaviest sale of notions, or tending the greatest number of looms ; it is not breaking records in packing prunes or picking hops ; nor yet is it outdoing all others in vamping shoes or spooling cotton.

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

The prime function of woman must ever be the perpetuating of the race. If these other activities render her physically or morally unfit for the discharge of this larger social duty, then woe to the generations that not only permit but encourage such wanton prostitution of function. The woman is worth more to society in dollars and cents as the mother of healthy children than as the swiftest laborer of cans. Yet our present industrial practice would indicate a preponderance of value in the latter. Five years of factory work may, and frequently do, render a girl of twenty-one nearly or quite a physical wreck, so far as normal functioning is concerned. She may live thirty or forty years, she may even continue as a wage-earner, but at what a cost !

It would appear from this that the plain duty of society is to have a care for its ever increasing throng of working girls. They must be protected. Desirable legislation should be sought and obtained, and, moreover, maintained, regardless of constitutional quibble. A shorter working day and a higher wage should be advocated, and all types of organizations working for industrial betterment should coöperate in the effort to make America's wage-earning young women fit daughters of the country's noblest traditions and fit mothers of her future sons.

This is the task.

As has been emphasized here before, much excellent work for the betterment of laboring and living conditions of wage-earning women is now being done, but the equipment does not begin to equal the needs. Increased effort and ingenuity devoted to securing desirable changes would undoubtedly bring a rich reward in the resulting industrial, social, and spiritual uplift of the people.

To recapitulate and reënforce our belief, we present the

## SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

following suggestions toward advancement in which all betterment bodies could unite :

1. Improved and uniform legislation in the different states.

2. Disinterested coöperation with employers to secure better conditions.

3. The promotion of greater efficiency on the part of employees by all practical means.

4. Reduction of the number of hours in the working day and a higher rate of payment for labor.

5. The establishment of residential clubs or hotels on a self-supporting basis for girls away from home. Even with a good wage it is frequently hard for the young girl to find a suitable abiding-place.

6. Closer coöperation between existing organizations for industrial betterment.

7. New organizations to be encouraged only where special needs must be met. Existing movements to be strengthened wherever their usefulness has been demonstrated. Such an attitude would be economically and ethically sound.

8. Far-reaching studies in regard to the specific effect of different occupations on health. This is the great need in every industrial center.

And last, but extremely important,

9. A change in the character of recreational opportunities now available. In no community do wholesome recreational facilities have a higher functional value than in industrial towns. The fatigue and the monotony of long hours of toil make necessary, for the few hours of leisure, forms of activity which will bring refreshment by offering new interest and variety. The working girl does not need merely to be amused, she needs to be stimu-

## WAGE-EARNING WOMEN

lated by an interest stronger than any her work can hold for her.

Constructive work along these lines would do much to offset the devitalizing tendencies of modern industry. We ask all this that the young girl in the shop and at the machine "may have life and have it more abundantly."



APPENDICES, BIBLIOGRAPHY  
AND INDEX



## APPENDIX I

### LIST OF INVESTIGATORS

#### New England:

Clawson, Edith, A.B.  
Hewes, Amy, Ph.D.  
Merrill, Flora A., A.B.  
Rhoades, Mabel C., Ph.D.

#### New York City and New Jersey:

Beavers, Genevieve W., A.B.  
Casamajor, Alice, M.A.  
Conyngton, Mary K., M.A.  
Manning, Caroline, M.A.  
Mead, Belle, A.M.  
Packard, Charlotte M., Mus. B.  
Stecker, Margaret L., A.B.  
Stephens, Ada M., A.B.  
Welles, Julia T., A.B.  
Wynbladh, Sigrid, A.B.

#### Pennsylvania:

Foote, Alice E., A.B.  
Tanner, Amy E., Ph.D.

#### Middle West, including Chicago:

Abbott, Bonnie E., A.B.  
Burton, Margaret E., A.B.  
Kringel, Mary L., A.M.  
Lyman, Grace, Ph.B.  
MacLean, Mildred, A.M.  
Miller, Helen D., Ph.B.  
Phelps, Clara L., A.B.  
Stewart, Zelda E.,  
Terry, Edith B., A.B.

#### Far West:

Eaves, Ruth, A.B.  
Evans, Helen, B.L.  
Gray, Jean, A.B.  
Spadoni, Adrienne, B.L.

# APPENDIX II

## SCHEDULES

### SCHEDULE I—FOR EMPLOYERS

#### FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

Acting under the auspices of the National Board of Y.W.C.A.'s

#### CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Name ----- Location -----

Industry -----

Number employed ----- Number of women employed -----

Betterment work conducted -----

Attitude toward betterment work on a Christian basis -----

Remarks -----

## APPENDIX II

### SCHEDULE II—FOR TOWN OR CITY

#### FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

Acting under the auspices of the National Board of Y.W.C.A.'s

Name.....Population.....

Chief industries.....

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Number of establishments employing women.....

Number of women employed.....

Nationalities.....

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Local efforts in behalf of these women.....

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Comments.....

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## APPENDIX II

### SCHEDULE III—FOR MINING REGIONS

#### FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

Acting under the auspices of the National Board of Y.W.C.A.'s

Name of place.....Population.....

Special industry.....

Number employed.....Women.....

Nationalities.....

Other women in community: occupations.....

Nationalities.....

Housing conditions.....

Social life.....

Amusements.....

Clubs or centers for women.....

Church undertakings in behalf of women.....

Remarks.....

## APPENDIX II

### SCHEDULE IV—HOMES FOR WORKING WOMEN FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

Acting under the auspices of the National Board of Y.W.C.A.'s

City.....Population.....

Women employed.....Number not living at home.....

Name of home.....

Street and number.....

Number accommodated.....Age limit.....

Wage limit .....

Cost per week.....

Under auspices of.....

Regulations.....

Self-supporting.....

Comments.....



## APPENDIX II

### SCHEDULE V

#### INFORMATION CONCERNING INDIVIDUALS (Confidential) FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

Acting under the auspices of the National Board of Y.W.C.A.'s

Name (or initials)\_\_\_\_\_Nationality\_\_\_\_\_Age\_\_\_\_\_

Marital condition\_\_\_\_\_Born in city or country\_\_\_\_\_

Reason for coming to city\_\_\_\_\_

Attitude toward returning to country\_\_\_\_\_

Industry\_\_\_\_\_

Establishment\_\_\_\_\_Address\_\_\_\_\_

Form of employment\_\_\_\_\_

How long employed\_\_\_\_\_Average wage\_\_\_\_\_Dependents\_\_\_\_\_

General conditions of establishment: Light\_\_\_\_\_Air\_\_\_\_\_Height (in stories)\_\_\_\_\_

Elevators\_\_\_\_\_Regulations as to use\_\_\_\_\_

Lunch room for women\_\_\_\_\_Dressing rooms\_\_\_\_\_

Separate toilets\_\_\_\_\_Seats provided\_\_\_\_\_Length of day\_\_\_\_\_

Overtime\_\_\_\_\_Payment for overtime\_\_\_\_\_Fines imposed\_\_\_\_\_

Mutual Benefit Association\_\_\_\_\_Weekly dues\_\_\_\_\_

Benefits in sickness\_\_\_\_\_Burial or death benefits\_\_\_\_\_

Housing conditions: Living at home\_\_\_\_\_Cost per week\_\_\_\_\_

Boarding house\_\_\_\_\_Cost per week\_\_\_\_\_

Lodging house\_\_\_\_\_Cost per week\_\_\_\_\_Cost of meals per week\_\_\_\_\_

Opportunities for social life: At home\_\_\_\_\_

Boarding house\_\_\_\_\_Lodging house\_\_\_\_\_Clubs\_\_\_\_\_

Opportunities for study: Classes or lectures\_\_\_\_\_Subject preferred\_\_\_\_\_

Club work\_\_\_\_\_Libraries\_\_\_\_\_

Recreation: Theater\_\_\_\_\_Other forms of amusement\_\_\_\_\_

Favorite form\_\_\_\_\_Sum per week spent for amusement\_\_\_\_\_

Vacation\_\_\_\_\_With or without pay\_\_\_\_\_How long\_\_\_\_\_

Where spent\_\_\_\_\_Cost\_\_\_\_\_Chief pleasure\_\_\_\_\_

Church attendance\_\_\_\_\_Sundays\_\_\_\_\_Week days\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX III

Four tables of statistics <sup>1</sup> relative to women wage-earners in the United States.

*Table I.*

Comparative statement in regard to women wage-earners in the United States in the three decades from 1880 to 1900.

*Table II.*

Race and nativity of female breadwinners in 1900.

*Table III.*

Women in gainful occupations classified by states and territories for 1900.

*Table IV.*

Female breadwinners, classified according to occupation, race, nativity, and per cent of distribution.

### TABLE I

CENSUS	FEMALES 16 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER		
	TOTAL	BREADWINNERS	
		Number	Per cent
Continental U.S.			
1900	23,485,559	4,833,630	20.6
1890	18,957,672	3,596,615	19.0
1880	14,752,258	2,353,988	16.0

<sup>1</sup> Census of 1900.

# APPENDIX III

## TABLE II

RACE AND NATIVITY	FEMALES 16 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER		
	TOTAL	BREADWINNERS	
		Number	Per cent
All classes	23,482,559	4,833,630	20.6
Native white: both parents native	12,130,161	1,771,966	14.6
Native white: one or both parents foreign born	4,288,969	1,090,744	25.4
Foreign-born white	4,403,494	840,011	19.1
Negro	2,589,988	1,119,621	43.2
Indian and Mongolian	72,947	11,288	15.5



TABLE III—WOMEN ENGAGED IN GAINFUL OCCUPATIONS, 16 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER, CLASSIFIED BY STATES AND TERRITORIES FOR 1900

STATE	Women engaged in All Occupations	Agricultural Laborers	Farmers, Planters, and Overseers	Actresses, Professional Showwomen, etc.	Artists and Teachers of Art	Literary and Scientific Persons	Musicians and Teachers of Music	Officials (Government)	Physicians and Surgeons	Teachers and Professors in Colleges, etc.	Barbers and Hairdressers	Boarding and Lodging-house keepers	Hotel Keepers	Housekeepers and Stewardesses	Janitors and Sextons	Laborers (not specified)	Laundresses	Nurses and Midwives	Servants and Waitresses	Agents	Bookkeepers and Accountants	Clerks and Copyists	Merchants and Dealers (except wholesale)	Packers and Shippers	Saleswomen	Stenographers and Typewriters	Telegraph and Telephone Operators	Bookbinders	Boot and Shoemakers and Repairs	Boxmakers (Paper)	Confectioners	Glovmakers	Gold and Silver Workers	Paper and Pulp Mill Operatives	Printers, Lithographers, and Presswomen	Rubber Factory Operatives	Textile-mill Operatives	Carpet Factory Operatives	Cotton-mill Operatives	Hosiery and Knitting Mill Operatives	Silk-mill Operatives	Woolen-mill Operatives	Dressmakers	Hat and Cap Makers	Milliners	Seamstresses	Shirt, Collar, and Cuff Makers	Tailoresses	Tobacco and Cigar Factory Operatives					
For Continental United States	4,833,630	456,405	307,706	6,661	10,907	5,984	52,010	8,119	7,387	327,206	5,440	59,445	8,533	146,929	8,010	106,916	328,935	108,691	1,165,561	10,468	72,896	81,000	33,825	17,052	142,265	85,086	21,980	14,303	36,490	14,498	7,805	7,170	5,767	8,709	15,353	6,945	231,458	8,332	97,181	28,203	26,432	27,169	338,144	7,049	82,936	138,724	27,788	61,571	37,125					
Maine	49,917	123	2,963	19	121	115	567	151	67	5,490	11	724	95	3,292	2	371	995	1,277	10,832	105	1,076	923	228	144	1,207	685	180	49	1,457	92	65	3	262	372	4	7,907	3	5,322	28	1,362	3,380	26	1,134	705	132	763	23							
New Hampshire	39,807	69	1,469	20	73	87	306	77	61	2,817	16	548	33	2,595	4	226	634	940	6,735	72	755	471	128	68	614	294	120	17	3,131	163	6	97	138	155	8	1,170	156	1,016	2,138	2	658	474	11	401	12									
Vermont	21,852	112	1,336	3	48	60	276	73	21	2,845	9	346	13	1,744	1	231	541	683	6,054	50	355	222	77	20	441	323	76	28	91	43	36	2	49	142	7	550	432	1	316	1,681	3	539	538	453	322	3								
Massachusetts	317,558	207	1,595	348	887	850	3,467	282	729	15,857	346	4,221	137	11,356	268	880	8,751	9,035	68,701	813	11,294	6,486	2,097	2,314	11,686	6,431	1,380	1,657	16,359	2,687	845	125	1,765	3,735	1,946	2,789	60,695	1,188	34,393	3,261	1,448	9,515	19,471	633	4,815	6,147	1,314	3,406	533					
Rhode Island	48,203	74	190	36	93	51	456	41	56	2,100	30	654	16	1,542	17	240	1,572	950	8,146	104	1,351	958	322	304	1,408	585	160	72	118	318	34	3	1,910	13	84	1,024	15,941	2	6,654	400	220	3,324	3,050	10	713	641	53	261	54					
Connecticut	83,898	121	1,375	52	168	171	844	73	122	5,061	72	1,158	47	3,374	34	1,120	2,511	2,582	18,101	177	1,856	1,266	400	1,191	2,527	1,528	327	109	206	1,117	31	5	143	370	254	1,413	11,787	339	3,882	1,212	2,721	1,755	5,286	1,269	1,264	1,017	481	254	141					
New York	635,319	1,269	10,512	2,817	1,946	1,038	6,765	499	925	35,410	1,145	6,370	634	16,137	4,294	4,534	25,861	18,541	174,280	1,650	13,391	13,502	6,294	2,950	28,920	16,269	3,423	4,450	3,807	3,831	1,543	4,993	793	1,062	2,917	385	24,061	3,085	2,413	6,799	3,166	2,495	63,582	2,120	12,715	22,713	14,507	20,916	8,292					
New Jersey	142,718	365	1,283	142	344	176	1,378	109	176	7,836	160	2,003	258	4,177	361	3,417	11,388	9,045	115,006	854	6,572	8,348	4,764	2,168	17,250	6,465	1,946	1,453	2,199	1,697	1,042	72	241	658	1,141	257	35,628	2,158	2,771	7,922	9,045	2,517	39,131	910	8,007	10,651	3,827	6,391	8,234					
Pennsylvania	395,656	871	9,296	265	889	498	4,128	554	601	24,374	415	4,691	361	15,060	754	3,417	11,388	9,045	115,006	854	6,572	8,348	4,764	2,168	17,250	6,465	1,946	1,453	2,199	1,697	1,042	72	241	658	1,141	257	35,628	2,158	2,771	7,922	9,045	2,517	39,131	910	8,007	10,651	3,827	6,391	8,234					
Delaware	11,894	107	316	7	17	8	128	13	7	717	7	207	5	496	7	252	609	264	4,024	13	190	232	238	8	403	137	39	10	11	13	10	—	—	72	41	—	—	741	4	318	258	59	43	1,164	2	215	233	184	88	47				
Maryland	91,097	899	2,250	81	149	87	703	100	87	4,755	84	820	48	2,294	203	1,764	10,316	2,390	28,945	109	712	1,094	1,470	642	3,273	872	195	161	138	264	237	37	15	75	67	3	2,311	13	1,679	253	89	84	7,056	145	1,612	6,612	2,058	2,110	721					
District of Columbia	40,382	4	9	32	146	78	307	18	56	1,598	86	480	21	529	40	261	7,156	1,311	14,694	61	476	4,661	417	8	1,247	707	82	279	—	7	34	2	3	5	480	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—			
Virginia	114,438	7,856	12,164	57	85	38	464	186	32	6,769	28	933	92	2,704	39	5,939	19,266	3,024	35,204	71	283	668	524	328	1,254	514	225	84	73	216	24	59	11	41	92	—	—	1,744	13	987	386	170	69	3,875	5	657	3,048	105	328	3,446				
West Virginia	28,630	398	4,831	13	57	13	271	80	18	2,688	15	483	114	1,743	26	408	1,655	458	8,266	41	198	371	174	119	655	327	165	28	7	21	20	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—			
North Carolina	127,740	38,001	16,074	7	49	13	333	184	22	4,088	9	698	128	2,186	11	9,845	12,506	2,139	21,395	51	146	246	207	193	555	226	128	23	6	22	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
South Carolina	142,433	71,865	13,545	2	31	13	236	104	17	3,150	12	427	66	892	10	10,177	12,490	1,079	14,210	29	118	190	242	4	485	193	117	22	6	4	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Georgia	182,037	59,744	14,398	32	105	38	628	221	43	5,480	22	1,707	161	1,659	34	10,108	29,989	3,090	29,932	105	282	495	415	40	932	585	250	68	28	84	46	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Florida	33,459	6,953	3,100	19	48	17	203	84	21	1,603	6	525	127	467	9	2,000	7,241	711	5,600	37	86	130	159	8	196	142	61	6	3	4	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ohio	233,177	1,037	13,169	237	704	364	3,492	429	451	18,580	269	2,879	359	9,542	460	2,256	10,535	4,600	60,953	722	4,704	5,590	1,760	1,449	9,555	6,346	1,773	763	2,792	846	397	143	31	558	1,258	485	1,951	232	74	586	6	598	22,280	105	6,172	9,668	324	5,282	4,263					
Indiana	111,024	659	8,804	85	225	148	1,863	282	195	9,806	168	1,890	288	4,917	132	1,157	6,139	1,917	29,889	458	2,087	1,760	664	310	4,247	2,457	782	263	104	123	164	101	12	88	584	40	2,097	153	923	444	429	9,168	69	3,483	6,214	447	1,156	571						
Illinois	275,105	1,312	10,159	716	1,040	539	4,527	510	820	23,087	584	4,198	651	10,130	436	2,401	12,941	6,073	74,919	1,035	7,346	10,610	2,253	1,032	11,443	10,554	1,096	1,651	918	818	741	643	88	251	1,133	34	1,542	189	132	619	89	150	24,590	121	7,195	11,518	453	6,337	1,042					
Michigan	126,517	742	7,801	121	386	199	2,089	216	270	12,834	175	1,782	236	5,339	115	1,372	3,882	2,881	36,542	452	2,765	3,259	877	406	4,474	2,801	1,203	330	233	307	186	33	7	335	587	584	40	2,097	153	923	444	429	9,168	69	3,483	6,214	447	1,156	571					
Wisconsin	106,474	1,137	6,815	62	184	105	1,236	173	154	12,137	128	1,041	231	3,796	64	877	3,075	2,158	33,593	242	1,634	1,825	645	505	4,082	2,013	506	276	578	177	364	222	3	577	435	71	2,230	96	125	1,207	353	12,262	89	2,742	2,310	134	1,200	378						
Minnesota	90,887	852	5,402	183	226	118	1,073	173	199	10,825	123	949	239	4,211	53	417	3,154	2,233	31,648	208	1,467	2,327	397	176	2,529	2,395	467	218	385	93	238	16	1	23	298	1	419	47	87	8,520	42	2,050	2,977	159	399	209								
Iowa	102,037	834	6,846	74	276	147	2,186	391	260	19,579	101	1,118	276	5,251	58	740	3,395	1,727	26,588	358	1,543	1,655	446	241	3,532	1,947	590	150	176	47	187	70	1	7	650	—	374	177	1	65	104	10,666	15	3,450	2,535	42	610	406						
Missouri	145,498	1,247	13,862	153	357	152	2,197	284	303	11,711	222	2,585	496	4,534	198	1,585	12,462	2,560	38,670	408	2,126	2,380	925	549	5,296	4,369	847	554	1,666	260	465	10	11	89	748	26	463	55	44	9	102	9,592	40	3,823	8,525	402	1,756	1,287						
North Dakota	13,073	273	1,312	3	14	7	120	32	15	1,876	9	111	47	1,707	—	108	354	216	5,275	23	73	124																																

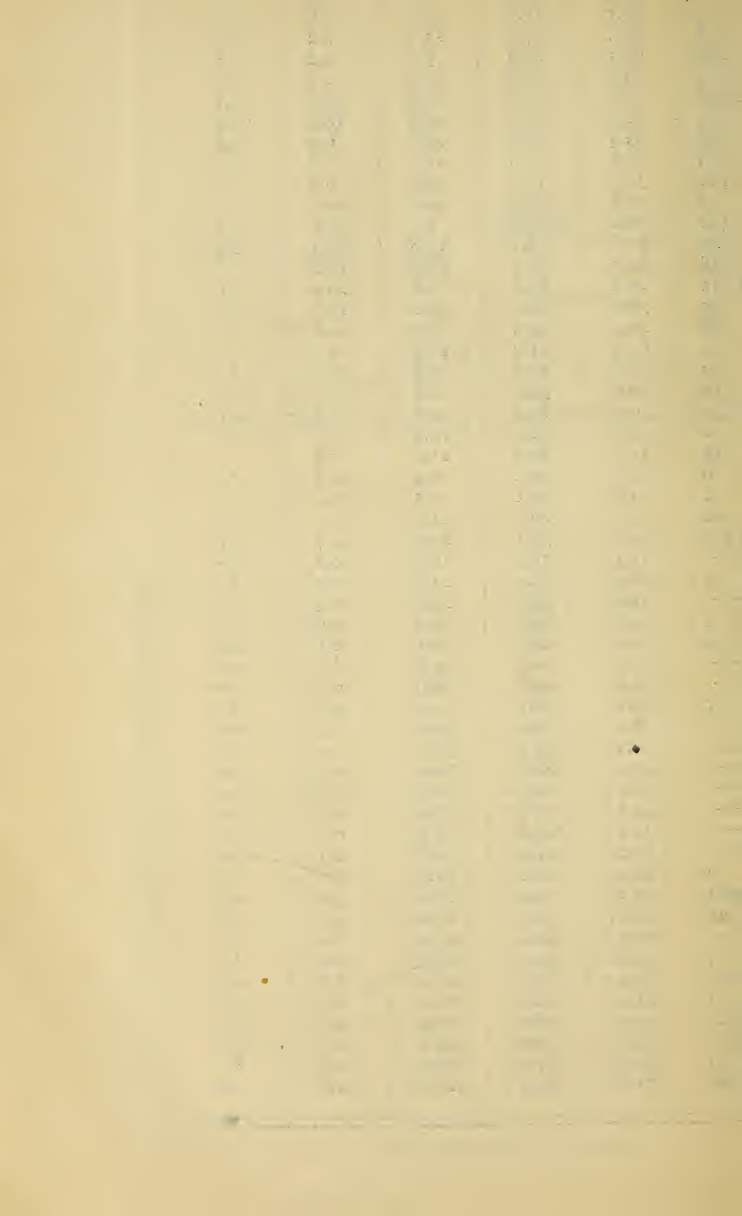




TABLE IV—FEMALE BREADWINNERS, 16 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER, CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO OCCUPATION, RACE, AND NATIVITY, AND PERCENT OF DISTRIBUTION

OCCUPATION	TOTAL NUMBER	PERCENT OF DISTRIBUTION	PERCENT OF WOMEN IN GIVEN OCCUPATION OF TOTAL WORKERS IN GIVEN OCCUPATION	NUMBER					PERCENT				
				NATIVE WHITE		FOREIGN- BORN WHITE	NEGRO	INDIAN AND MONGOLIAN	NATIVE WHITE		FOREIGN- BORN WHITE	NEGRO	INDIAN AND MONGOLIAN
				Both Parents Native	One or Both Parents Foreign Born				Both Parents Native	One or Both Parents Foreign Born			
All occupations	4,833,630	100.0	17.7	1,771,066	1,090,744	840,011	1,119,621	11,288	36.7	22.6	17.4	23.2	0.2
Agricultural pursuits	770,055	15.9	8.3	264,639	25,763	40,874	434,041	4,738	34.4	3.3	5.3	50.4	0.6
Agricultural laborers	456,405	9.4	13.6	82,565	6,236	4,543	361,804	1,257	18.1	1.4	1.0	79.3	0.3
Farmers, planters, and overseers	307,700	6.4	5.4	179,448	18,663	34,975	71,665	2,955	58.3	6.1	11.4	23.3	1.0
Other agricultural pursuits	5,944	0.1	2.1	2,626	864	1,356	572	526	44.2	14.5	22.8	9.6	8.8
Professional service	429,497	8.9	34.2	275,110	112,767	25,827	15,508	285	64.1	26.3	6.0	3.6	0.1
Actresses, professional showwomen, etc.	6,661	0.1	19.5	3,404	1,983	1,020	246	8	55.1	29.8	15.3	3.7	0.1
Artists and teachers of art	10,907	0.2	44.3	7,584	2,361	875	83	4	69.5	21.6	8.0	0.8	1
Literary and scientific persons	5,984	0.1	31.8	4,435	1,163	361	25	—	74.1	19.4	6.0	0.4	—
Musicians and teachers of music	52,010	1.1	56.9	34,138	13,347	3,349	1,159	17	65.6	25.7	6.4	2.2	1
Officials (Government)	8,119	0.2	9.4	6,127	1,520	415	50	7	75.5	18.7	5.1	0.6	0.1
Physicians and surgeons	7,387	0.2	5.6	4,882	1,274	1,063	160	8	66.1	17.2	14.4	2.2	0.1
Teachers and professors in colleges, etc.	327,206	6.8	73.4	207,823	88,449	17,218	13,478	238	63.5	27.0	5.3	4.1	0.1
Other professional service	11,223	0.2	2.7	6,717	2,670	1,526	307	3	59.9	23.8	13.6	2.7	1
Domestic and personal service	1,953,467	40.4	36.8	535,156	325,788	445,744	634,083	2,696	27.4	16.7	23.3	32.5	0.1
Barbers and hairdressers	5,440	0.1	4.2	1,670	1,775	1,002	91	12	30.7	32.6	18.4	18.0	0.2
Boarding and lodging-house keepers	59,455	1.2	83.4	31,756	9,784	14,305	3,576	34	53.4	16.5	24.1	6.0	0.1
Hotel keepers	8,533	0.2	15.6	5,040	1,518	1,807	152	16	59.1	17.8	21.2	1.8	0.2
Housekeepers and stewardesses	146,929	3.0	94.7	77,912	29,178	30,331	9,406	102	53.0	19.9	20.6	6.4	0.1
Janitors and sextons	8,010	0.2	14.2	1,348	1,916	3,889	854	3	16.8	23.9	48.6	10.7	1
Lahorers (not specified)	106,916	2.2	4.3	21,639	6,778	7,925	70,112	462	20.2	6.3	7.4	65.6	0.4
Laundresses	328,935	6.8	86.8	41,643	28,727	42,774	215,042	749	12.7	8.7	13.0	65.4	0.2
Nurses and midwives	108,691	2.2	89.9	43,764	19,505	26,702	12,672	48	40.3	17.9	24.6	17.2	1
Servants and waitresses	1,165,561	24.1	81.9	305,883	223,327	322,062	313,078	1,211	26.2	19.2	27.6	26.9	0.1
Other domestic and personal service	14,997	0.3	3.6	4,501	3,280	4,947	2,210	59	30.0	21.9	33.0	14.7	0.4
Trade and transportation	481,159	10.0	10.4	223,840	193,528	59,773	3,920	98	46.5	40.2	12.4	0.8	1
Agents	10,468	0.2	4.4	6,641	2,247	1,313	265	2	63.4	21.5	12.5	2.5	1
Bookkeepers and accountants	72,896	1.5	28.8	35,896	30,610	6,194	189	7	49.2	42.0	8.5	0.3	1
Clerks and copyists	81,000	1.7	13.3	40,984	32,099	7,368	539	10	50.6	39.6	9.1	0.7	1
Merchants and dealers (retail)	33,825	0.7	4.3	10,462	8,218	14,254	856	35	30.9	24.3	42.1	2.5	0.1
Packers and shippers	17,052	0.4	31.0	6,091	8,309	2,426	224	2	35.7	48.7	14.2	1.3	1
Saleswomen	142,265	2.9	24.1	60,120	64,857	16,896	378	14	42.3	45.6	11.9	0.3	1
Stenographers and typewriters	85,086	1.8	76.7	45,373	33,688	5,845	174	6	53.3	39.6	6.9	0.2	1
Telegraph and telephone operators	21,980	0.5	29.8	12,011	8,601	1,355	11	2	54.6	39.1	6.2	0.1	1
Others in trade and transportation	16,587	0.3	0.9	6,262	4,899	4,122	1,284	20	37.8	29.5	24.9	7.7	0.1
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits	1,199,452	24.8	17.6	473,221	432,898	257,793	32,069	3,471	39.5	36.1	21.5	2.7	0.3
Bookbinders	14,393	0.3	50.5	4,487	8,207	1,575	34	—	31.4	57.4	11.0	0.2	—
Boot and shoemakers, and repairers	36,490	0.8	18.2	14,720	16,500	5,201	66	3	40.3	45.2	14.3	0.2	1
Boxmakers (paper)	14,498	0.3	81.6	4,620	7,793	2,041	44	—	31.9	53.8	14.1	0.3	—
Confectioners	7,805	0.2	26.8	2,315	3,528	1,894	67	1	29.7	45.2	24.3	0.9	1
Glovmakers	7,170	0.1	62.6	3,969	2,138	1,014	10	39	55.4	29.8	14.1	0.1	0.5
Gold and silver workers	5,767	0.1	23.3	1,607	3,029	1,129	2	—	27.9	52.5	19.6	1	—
Paper and pulp mill operatives	8,709	0.2	25.0	2,558	3,899	2,227	25	—	29.4	44.8	25.6	0.3	—
Printers, lithographers, presswomen	15,353	0.3	10.3	8,453	5,793	1,100	96	1	55.1	37.1	7.2	0.6	1
Rubber factory operatives	6,945	0.1	33.3	1,257	3,507	2,180	1	—	18.1	50.5	31.4	1	—
Textile-mill operatives	231,458	4.8	50.0	74,617	77,521	78,833	481	6	32.2	33.5	34.1	0.2	1
Carpet factory operatives	8,332	0.2	46.2	2,164	3,648	2,513	7	—	26.0	43.8	30.2	0.1	—
Cotton-mill operatives	97,181	2.0	48.1	35,079	20,299	41,514	289	—	36.1	20.9	42.7	0.3	—
Hosiery and knitting mill operatives	28,293	0.6	72.8	12,333	10,606	5,339	15	—	43.6	37.5	18.9	0.1	—
Silk-mill operatives	26,432	0.5	58.1	8,571	11,304	6,513	44	—	32.4	42.8	24.6	0.2	—
Woolen-mill operatives	27,169	0.6	40.8	6,803	11,380	8,916	70	—	25.0	41.9	32.8	0.3	—
Other textile-mill operatives	44,051	0.9	47.8	9,667	20,284	14,038	56	6	21.9	46.0	31.9	0.1	1
Textile workers	675,255	14.0	77.4	293,664	232,297	122,847	24,385	2,062	43.5	34.4	18.2	3.6	0.3
Dressmakers	338,144	7.0	99.4	152,821	117,287	55,523	12,418	95	45.2	34.7	16.4	3.7	1
Hat and cap makers	7,049	0.1	32.4	2,491	2,987	1,569	2	—	35.3	42.4	22.3	1	—
Milliners	82,936	1.7	98.0	45,186	28,748	8,829	169	4	54.5	34.7	10.6	0.2	1
Seamstresses	138,724	2.9	96.8	60,223	41,888	25,050	11,296	267	43.4	30.2	18.1	8.1	0.2
Shirt, collar, and cuff makers	27,788	0.6	77.6	11,412	11,665	4,598	109	4	41.1	42.0	16.5	0.4	1
Tailoresses	61,571	1.3	29.1	14,087	23,631	23,447	301	105	22.9	38.4	38.1	0.5	0.2
Other textile workers	10,043	0.4	69.1	7,444	6,091	3,831	90	1,587	39.1	32.0	20.1	0.5	8.3
Tohacco and cigar factory operatives	37,125	0.8	30.9	12,750	10,028	9,705	4,639	3	34.3	27.0	26.1	12.5	1
Other m'f'g and mechanical pursuits	138,574	2.9	2.9	48,204	58,748	28,047	2,219	1,356	34.8	42.4	20.2	1.6	1.0

\* Less than one-tenth of one percent.





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THE limitations of this bibliography are obvious. The attempt is simply to suggest some magazine articles,<sup>1</sup> grouped according to subject-matter, with an indication of contents in order that any phase of the subject may readily be studied, even by those not familiar with the general field.

In addition to this, there is included a short list of books presenting the varied problems of women who work. It is assumed that students of industrial conditions can readily add to this list.

### BOOKS

ABBOTT. "Women in Industry."

ADAMS and SUMNER. "Labor Problems."

BUTLER. "Women and the Trades."

CADBURY, MATHESON, and SHANN. "Women's Work and Wages."

ELY. "Labor Movement in America."

MITCHELL. "Organized Labor."

### MAGAZINE ARTICLES

GENERAL. — "The Working Women of To-day," by Helen Campbell, the *Arena*, 4 : 329. Mentions briefly the changes which have taken place in method and kind of women's work, and gives a brief résumé of the findings of the Commissioner of Labor for 1888.

"The Conditions of Wage-earning Women," by Clare de Graffenried, the *Forum*, 15 : 68.

<sup>1</sup> Between the years 1890 and 1907.

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Part IV: 7 : 668. General conditions for English continental workers and for those in the United States.

Part V: 8 : 32. General conditions in the western states.

Part VI: 8 : 172. Specific evils and abuses in factory life, remedies, and suggestions.

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2. Statistics of the employment of women in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits from 1800 to 1900.
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# INDEX

- Addams, Jane, 168.
- Amusements :  
     Favorite form, 52, 82, 83.  
     In coal fields, 137, 138.  
     *See* Recreation.
- Armenians, 117, 122, 123.
- Association of Working Girls' Clubs,  
     46, 169, 170.
- Benefit societies, 84, 170.
- Betterment work :  
     Encouragement of organizations  
         for, 179.  
     Need for coöperation in, 179.  
     Suggestions for, 179.
- Bibles, conditions of making, 43.
- Bibliography, 189-196.
- Boarding homes. *See* Homes for  
     working women.
- Bohemians, 41, 57.
- Breweries :  
     Hours of work in, 89, 90.  
     Wages in, 90.  
     Women's work in, 90.
- Button making :  
     Wages in, 88, 89.  
     Women's work in, 88.
- Canadians :  
     English, 94, 96.  
     French, 25, 96.
- Chinese, 123.
- Churches :  
     In coal fields, 154-158.
- Clothing industry :  
     Conditions of work in, 33, 60, 62,  
         86, 87, 96.  
     Corsets, 59, 97.  
     Damaged goods, 62.  
     Hours of work in, 36, 58, 59, 87,  
         95.
- Wages in, 33, 34, 58, 59, 61, 86,  
     95, 96, 97.
- Women in, 32, 33, 56, 57, 87, 88,  
     96.
- Clubs :  
     Association of Working Girls'  
         Clubs, 46, 169, 170.  
     Eleanor, 171, 172.  
     Lunch, 71.  
     Social, 69.
- Coal fields :  
     Amusements in, 137, 138.  
     Betterment work in, 154-159.  
     Housing conditions in, 133-  
         136.  
     Location of, 130-133.  
     Moral conditions in, 139.  
     Needs of people in,  
     Tables of information concerning,  
         141-153.  
     Women in, 135, 137.
- College women :  
     In investigation, 8.  
     Responsibilities of, 161.
- Consumers' League, 164.
- Cotton industry :  
     Conditions in mills, 15, 16.  
     Hours in, 16.  
     Processes in, 12-14.  
     Wages in, 17.
- Curtains :  
     Typical factories, 36, 37, 38.  
     Wages, 37.  
     Women's work, 37.
- Department stores :  
     Hours in, 65, 66.  
     Life in, 63, 64, 66, 67.  
     Wages in, 64, 65.
- Dickens, Charles, 11.
- Dodge, Grace H., 169.

# INDEX

- Eleanor Clubs, 171, 172.
- Electrical establishments :
  - Conditions in, 67, 68.
  - Hours in, 70.
  - Wages in, 69.
  - Women in, 69.
- Employers, need for coöperation with, 179.
- Factory legislation :
  - Need for improved, 165.
  - Table showing state, 165 (insert)
- Fruit industry :
  - Processes in, 117, 118.
  - Statistics for, 127, 128.
  - Wages in, 118-121, 125, 126.
  - Working conditions in, 117, 120, 121.
  - See* Vineyards.
- Gage, Frances, 111.
- Germans, 25, 41, 71, 90, 94, 117.
- Göhre, Paul, 100.
- Homes for working women :
  - Accommodations of, 46, 71.
  - Corporation, 93, 94.
  - Eleanor Clubs, 171, 172.
  - Need for establishment of, 179.
  - Number of, 46, 71.
  - Rates in, 46, 71.
  - Y. W. C. A., 8.
- Hop picking :
  - Advertisements for workers, 101.
  - Importance of Oregon in, 99.
  - Living conditions in fields, 104, 105, 110.
  - Statistics for, 114.
  - Sunday in field, 105-107.
  - Wages in, 108, 109.
  - Workers in, 99, 102.
- Hours, need for reduction of, 179.
- Hours of labor in :
  - Breweries, 89, 90.
  - Clothing industry, 36, 58, 59, 87, 95.
  - Cotton mills, 16.
  - Department stores, 65, 66.
  - Electrical establishments, 70.
  - Paper-box shops, 42.
  - Potteries, 79.
  - Thread mills, 92.
- Housing :
  - In coal fields, 133-136.
  - In Holyoke, 25, 26.
  - Value of efforts for, 170.
  - See* Homes for working women.
- Immigrants, 11.
- Indians, 123.
- Investigation :
  - Federal, 163, 169.
  - Value of, 162, 163.
- Investigation, National Board :
  - Industries studied, 4-7.
  - Method of, 8, 9.
  - Schedules used, 182-186.
  - Description of, 8
  - Scope of, 3-7.
  - States and cities studied, 4-7.
- Investigators :
  - Colleges represented by, 7.
  - List of, 181.
  - Number of, 8.
- Irish, 25, 41, 94.
- Israels, Mrs. Charles Henry, 47.
- Italians, 37, 41, 117.
- Japanese, 123.
- Jews, 29, 32, 41.
- Kelley, Mrs. Florence, 1.
- Larcom, Lucy, 18, 30.
- Lithuanians, 69.
- McDowell, Mary, 168.
- Mexicans, 117.
- Nativity, urban and rural, 49, 50.
- Paper boxes :
  - Hours of labor in making, 42.
  - Processes in making, 41, 42.
  - Wages for making, 42.
- Paper making :
  - Wages in, 25.

# INDEX

- Paper making — *continued*:  
 Women's work in, 24.  
 Paper novelties, conditions of making, 44.  
 Poles, 41, 57, 96.  
 Potteries:  
 Conditions in, 81.  
 Processes in, 79, 80.  
 Wages in, 81.  
 Women in, 79.  
 Processes in:  
 Cotton industry, 12-14.  
 Fruit industry, 117, 118.  
 Making paper boxes, 41, 42.  
 Making silk, 76, 77.  
 Pottery making, 79, 80.  
*See* Women's work.  
 Publishing houses, 43, 44.
- Recreation:  
 Need of opportunities for, 179, 180.  
 Value of, 179, 180.  
 Ribbon, 39, 40.  
 Roberts, Dr. Peter, 130.  
 Robertson, Ina Law, 171.  
 Robins, Mrs. Raymond, 167.  
 Russians, 117, 123, 124.
- Saleswomen. *See* Department stores.  
 Scandinavians, 57.  
 Settlements:  
 Activities, 45, 46, 70, 168, 169.  
 Number of, 45, 70.  
 Shoe industry:  
 Conditions in factories, 23.  
 History of, 17, 18.  
 Seasonal character, 20, 21.  
 Specialization in, 19.  
 Wages in, 21, 22.  
 Women's work in, 19, 20.  
 Silk:  
 Processes in making, 76, 77.  
 Wages, 77, 78.  
 Women at work, 75.  
 Simkhovitch, Mary Kingsbury, 168.
- Slavs, 133.  
 Social life, opportunities for, 53.  
 Statistics:  
 Charts of, 47-54.  
 Comparison between New York and Chicago, 71, 72.  
 Fruit industry, 127, 128.  
 Hop picking, 114.  
 Middle West, 98.  
 New England, 28, 29.  
 New Jersey, 82.  
 Women in places investigated, 4-7.  
 Women wage-earners in United States, 187, 188.
- Textiles. *See* Cotton industry, Ribbon, Thread making, Twine.  
 Thread, supplied by workers, 58.  
 Thread making:  
 Conditions in, 91, 92.  
 Hours in, 92.  
 Wages in, 93.  
 Women's work in, 92, 93.  
 Trade training, need for, 175, 176.  
 Trades unions:  
 Discussion of, 165, 166, 167.  
 Membership in, 46, 71.  
 Number of, 46, 71.
- Twine:  
 Conditions of work, 40.  
 Wages, 38, 39, 40.  
 Women's work, 38, 39.
- Vineyards:  
 Living conditions in, 121.  
 Location of, 116.  
 Workers in, 117.
- Wages in:  
 Breweries, 90.  
 Button factories, 88, 89.  
 Clothing industry, 33, 34, 58, 59, 61, 86, 95, 96, 97.  
 Cotton industry, 17.  
 Curtain factories, 37.  
 Department stores, 64, 65.  
 Electrical establishments, 69.

# INDEX

## Wages in — *continued* :

- Fruit industry, 118-121, 125, 126.
- Hop picking, 108, 109.
- Paper-box shops, 42.
- Paper making, 25.
- Potteries, 81.
- Shoe industry, 21, 22.
- Silk mills, 77, 78.
- Thread mills, 93.
- Twine factories, 38-40.

Wages, need for increased, 178, 179.

Wald, Lillian D., 168.

Welfare work, 46, 71, 167, 168.

Wettstein-Adelt, Frau Dr. Minna,  
100.

## Women :

- Effect of work upon, 12.
- Reasons for work, 29.

## Women in :

- Clothing industry, 32, 33, 56, 57,  
87, 88, 96.
- Coal fields, 135, 137.
- Electrical establishments, 69.
- Potteries, 79.
- Silk factories, 75.

## Women workers :

- Causes of inefficiency of, 176.
  - Effect of intensity upon, 177.
  - Needs of, 83, 84, 178.
  - Problems of, 176, 177.
  - Society's duty toward, 178.
- Women's Trade Union League, 166,  
167.

## Women's work in :

- Breweries, 89, 90.
- Button making, 88.
- Curtain factories, 37.
- Paper making, 24.
- Shoe industry, 19, 20.
- Thread making, 92, 93.
- Twine factories, 38, 39.

Working conditions, chart showing, 51.

## Working conditions in :

- Clothing shops, 33, 60, 62, 86,  
87, 96.
- Cotton mills, 15, 16.
- Curtain factories, 36, 37, 38.
- Department stores, 63, 64, 66, 67.
- Electrical establishments, 67, 68.
- Fruit industry, 117, 120, 121.
- Paper novelties, 44.
- Potteries, 81.
- Shoe factories, 23.
- Thread factories, 91, 92.
- Twine factories, 40.

Wyckoff, Professor Walter, 100.

Y. M. C. A., in coal fields, 155,  
157, 158.

Y. W. C. A., 2, 8 ; 170.

In Oregon, 111, 115.

Methods of work, 172.

National Board, 4.

Typical Association, 173.

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